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THE  
MODERN PART  
OF AN  
Universal History,

FROM THE  
Earliest Accounts to the Present Time.

Compiled from  
ORIGINAL AUTHORS.

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By the AUTHORS of the ANCIENT PART.

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V O L. XIII.

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THE  
MODERN PART

Universal History

FROM THE

Original Manuscript of the Author

ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT

WITH A NEW INTRODUCTION

AND A NEW PREFACE



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OF THE

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THE  
MODERN PART  
OF  
Universal History.

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CHAP. XLVII.

*Of the principal Kingdoms and Nations lying  
along the Western Coast of Africa, and of those  
which are contiguous to them on the Inland.*

THIS western and extensive coast, stretching in an almost direct line from Cape Negro, in the 16th degree south latitude, to the 4th degree north, in all twenty degrees, or one thousand six hundred miles, contains the following principal kingdoms, viz, Benguela, Angola, Kongo, Loango, and Pombo; and within land those of Meaman or Metamba, Macoko or Anziko, and Mulak, together with sundry other nations, known only to the Europeans by their names, and the traffic they carry on with the maritime kingdoms.

*The western coast described.*

SECT. I.

*Of the Kingdom of Benguela.*

THE kingdom of Benguela was, by the generality of geographers, supposed to extend along this coast from Cabo Negro, the Hottentot boundary, to the river of Coan-  
auzo, or Quanfa, which divides it on that side from Angola,  
M<sup>O</sup>D. VOL. XIII. B

*The kingdom of Benguela.*

gola, at about 10 degrees 5 minutes, south latitude. But Mr. De Lisle hath since corrected that error, and extends it no farther north than the Benguela Vekhia, or Old Benguela, in 9 degrees 54 minutes; it being probable the Portuguese have conquered so much of that coast, since they became masters of Angola, in which he places the country called Sowa Fuchi Canbari, and the river Cubegi. It is bounded, according to him, on the east by the Jaga Cafangi, or Jagan chief, who over-ran that tract in the time when our countryman Battel was among them; and probably, from a wandering life, which he and his savages had led till then, plundering and ravaging wherever he came, was at length invited to fix his abode there. On the south, our author places the province of Ohila, between the Hottentots and Benguelas, which tract is mostly inhabited by much such savage nations as the Caffres and Jagas.

*Coast, bays, and rivers.* The chief bays, towns, and rivers, on this coast, from Cape Negro to the river Coanza, are those that follow.

*Bay of Maifotto.* The bay of Maifotto, about five leagues south of the Coanza above mentioned, at the mouth of which are some small rocks and shelves, even with the water; five leagues farther to the south is Capo Ledo, and eight farther the Cape of the three Points; thence to Capo Falso four; from thence to that of St. Bras eleven; and from that to the Chicken or Heender's Bay, so called by the Dutch, from the vast quantities which are bred there, the coast runs low for the space of ten leagues. The country is fertile, and goes by the name of Viella Benguela, or Old Benguela: it hath a considerable bay, about two leagues in length, half a league broad, and between ten and twelve fathom deep; the bottom a slimy mud.

*Old Benguela described.*

On the south side of the bay is a town, or large village, situated in a high mountain, where large beeves, sheep, poultry, and other provisions, are sold in great plenty, together with elephants teeth: all which the inhabitants barter for muskets, and other fire-arms, which are here in great request. And it is this small territory which Mr. De Lisle comprehends under the name of Old Benguela, but the Dutch maps extend it quite from cape St. Bras to the Chicken's Bay. Five leagues farther south is the Rio Longo, called also the river Moreno, whose mouth is under the 11th degree of south latitude, but is so very shallow that small boats can hardly sail on it; and yet the natives have found out a way of navigating it in flat-bottomed vessels,

*Rio Longo not navigable.*



vessels, which they called pangales. 'The Portuguese, we are told, have likewise often attempted the same expedient, in order to bring their slaves from Massingan to this coast, but have not been able to compass it, by reason of its many sandy banks, and the rapidity of its course\*.

About eight leagues from that river is the town of Makikongo, where the Portuguese have their magazines of cloth, fire-arms, powder, &c. which they exchange with the inhabitants for beeves, hogs, ivory, and other wares. About fifteen leagues farther southward from that town is the mouth of the river Katon Bella, formed by two or three arms which unite there. It is spacious and convenient, fifteen or sixteen feet deep, sheltered from every wind, and fit for the largest vessels to ride in. The water of it is salt, and round the haven are deep ditches, dug to receive it, and harden it into salt. On the north side of the river the sea forms another kind of bay, large and safe for mariners to lie at anchor, on which account the Dutch have given it the name of The Good or Fair Bay. About two leagues south of it is another river, whose waters are fresh and sweet, but it discharges them into the sea only after a rainy season. *Fair Katon bay.* *Salt made of its water.*

Sailing still farther south, we come to the large bay of Benguela, which is two full leagues long from angle to angle, and about a league in breadth; on the north corner of it stands the town of its name, and a fort built by the Portuguese. Before the town is a large sandy bank, which hinders the vessels from anchoring nearer it than at a full league's distance: the fort is inclosed with palisadoes, and surrounded with houses, sheltered with bananas, orange and lemon trees, pomegranates, and bancovas. Behind it is a well of fresh water, and at some distance round Benguela are seven other villages depending upon it, viz. Motonda, Peringa, distant about a mile and an half from the fort, and about a mile from each other; Mam-Kisomba, a large settlement which can raise three thousand men; Mani-nomma, Mani-kisomba, Pikena, and Mani-kilonda; to which we may add the Mondombas and Montondos, two vassal nations to Benguela. The Portuguese were once settled in these towns; but fearing the natives would surround and fall upon them, retired to Massingua; in their flight they were closely pursued, and a great number of them destroyed. *Bay of Benguela.* *The towns and villages about it.*

\* De Lisle, ubi supra, Dapper, Afric.

*The mountain of Sombriero.*

On the west side of the bay of Benguela stands a high mountain, flat on the top, called by the Portuguese Sombriera, and by the Flemings Klop-mets, from its resemblance to a priest's angular cap. At the bottom of this mountain is another bay of the same name, whose water, though clear, is not fit to drink. All the shore to the southward appears like a spacious sandy plain, at the end of which is a deep and fruitful valley <sup>b</sup>.

This is all we meet with most remarkable on the Benguela coast; our geographers have added a list of the provinces inland, without mentioning any cities, towns, or other things remarkable, in any of them; their names are as follow:

*Its inland provinces.*

1. S. Namboa Angonga. 2. Gengt, or Quillenga. 3. Zemba Katira. 4. Zowa Quillembe. 5. Bembe, or Dos Quimbandos. 6. Sowa Angola Gimbo. 7. Zamba-gando. 8. Little Bemba. 9. Soua, or Zowa. 10. Pallanca. 11. Jaga Canhica. 12. Sowa Girata. 13. Cafanni Laquileudele. 14. Jaga Kalemba. 15. Jaga Kakondo. 16. The province or country of the Mufumbas.

On the coast are those of Liboto and Ango, Sowa Karia, Sowa Calembe Grande, the country of the Sumbis and Quimbondos.

*Cities, sea-ports, rivers and bays.*  
*Bayas das Vaccas.*

The chief ports and bays are those of Benguela, Viella or Old Benguela, Mankikondo, the fort of Cabuto, St. Philip or New Benguela, St. Maria Baya Falsa or The False Bay, Baya Tortuga, Angre de Negros, and Great Wiffers Bay, and that styled by the Portuguese Baya das Vaccas or Cow's Bay, on account of the great number of those creatures which are bred in its neighbourhood. This last, though not large, is fit to receive ships of burden; and the country, abounding with provisions of other kinds, makes it a place of resort for commerce; some mines of several metals, and particularly of silver, are said to be found near the bay <sup>c</sup>.

The chief rivers on this coast are the Rio Longo, Niea, Katon Bella, Gubororo or River of St. Francis, the Clabenia, and Cutembo.

Most parts of this kingdom were once populous and fertile, but suffered so much by the invasion of the Jagas, a vile wandering savage nation of cannibals, of whom we shall give a fuller account in the conclusion of this chapter, as well as by the frequent wars which the Benguelans have been engaged in against the kings of Kongo, and the

<sup>b</sup> De Lisle, Dapper, & al.  
Meroll's Voy.

<sup>c</sup> De his vide Carli Angelo, &



Portuguese of Angola, that the whole country was nearly ruined by the former, and in part subdued by the latter, in Battel's time, since which that coast hath been so little frequented by any other Europeans, that we can give but little account of its late or present state.

What its ancient government was, we are not told; but in all likelihood monarchical, since it is styled a kingdom. In 1589, the greater part was divided into a vast number of petty lordships, subject to the government of Angola.

The air of the country is so very unhealthy that it infects the very ground, and causes its produce, as well as the water of it, to be most unwholesome to the natives, and almost poisonous to the Europeans; so that they are forced to have all that they eat or drink brought from abroad; and, even with all this precaution, those few that hold out against the badness of the air and climate, look more like shadows, or men dug out of their graves, than human creatures. Few Europeans care to venture on shore, much less to stay long enough to inform themselves about the state or nature of the country, or of its inhabitants.

We are told, however, that there was a Portuguese governor in the new city of Benguela, or fort St. Philip, in the year 1666, when Carli was there; he adds, that there were then about two hundred white inhabitants, and a great number of blacks; that the houses are built of nothing better than mud and straw; these being the materials of which even the church and fort consist<sup>d</sup>. The people who live about this bay, called Endall Albondos, are a brutish lawless people, living without any government, and by no means to be trusted by those who traffic with them; though in other respects so simple and cowardly, that thirty or forty men may boldly go up through their country, and bring down whole herds of cattle. They traffic for no other money than a sort of glass beads, an inch long, of various colours, which they also use as ornaments about their necks and arms: sixteen of these will purchase a good fat cow<sup>e</sup>. The men wear skins round their middles, and collars about their neck; they use the bow and arrows, and carry darts pointed with iron; they allow themselves a plurality of women; and, which is still worse, keep some males in women's apparel among their wives. The women wear copper collars about their necks, said to weigh at least fifteen pounds each; they likewise adorn their arms with bells and bracelets, and

*Town of  
New Ben-  
guela*

<sup>d</sup> See his Voyage, p. 560.

<sup>e</sup> Battel ap. Purch. ubi supra.

cover the middle with a kind of cloth, made of the bark of the infanda tree, neither spun nor woven; their legs are likewise embellished with copper rings, reaching up to the calf.

*Mines of  
copper.*

The province to which this quarter belongs is called Dambe, noted for a high ridge of sierras, or high mountains, which extend to those of Combambas, where are the mines lately mentioned. These stretch along the coast south and west, and abound with fine copper, if the natives had but the industry to work them; but their indolence will not suffer them to use more of it than will serve them for ornaments<sup>f</sup>. Our author, who travelled through most of this country, as appears by the account he gives of himself, and the occasion of his being first brought a prisoner from the West Indies to Angola, by the Portuguese, from whom he made his escape, adds, that he saw many large towns in it, the most considerable of which he calls Kashiil, and describes<sup>g</sup> as very large, and so over grown with alicondie trees (A), cedars, and palms, that the streets are quite darkened with them. In  
the

*The town  
of Kashiil  
described.*

<sup>f</sup> Purchas Pilgr. ubi supra.

(A) We find this extraordinary tree thus pleasantly described by Purchas, from the report of the above mentioned Battel. The aliconda or eliconde tree is tall, and of a prodigious thickness, some of them being said to be as thick as twelve men can fathom. They spread like an oak, and some of them are hollow, and receive such plenty of water from the liberal skies, as to be able to allay the thirst of a thousand natives of these parched regions. Once have I known four thousand men draw water from one of them four and twenty hours, yet was it not exhausted.

any other way of climbing it) and I think that some of them hold forty tuns of water.

The tree affords a no less bountiful hospitality to the back than to the belly, yielding (as her belly to their bellies), so her back to their backs; excepting that this is better from the younger trees, whose tender backs, being more seasonable for discipline, are soundly beaten (for man's fault, whence came the first nakedness), whereby one fathom cut from the tree is extended into twenty, and is presently fit for wearing, though not so fine as that which the infanda tree yields.

The Negroes climb up by pegs of hard wood (which that softer one easily receiveth, its smoothness not admitting of

Dapper, who calls the above mentioned tree liconda, adds, that the natives of this and other kingdoms along this coast,

the middle of the town is the image of a man, standing on a pedestal twelve feet high, the foot of which is surrounded with a circle of elephants teeth, stuck into the ground; on the top of these are fastened the skulls of such men as have been killed in the wars, or offered to that idol. On such occasions they pour palm wine, mixed with the blood of goats, at the feet of it. This mokisso or image they call quessono, and pay a great veneration to it. He saw a great number of other smaller idols, scattered in several parts of the town, the streets of which are paved with palm canes placed in regular order. Each of those images hath heaps of elephants teeth piled around them; and at the south end of the town stood another idol, which had above three tons of these teeth laid over it. The houses are here built of mud and straw, and of a round figure, like that of a hive; the insides are covered with curious mats, and the outsides of some of them, especially of those which belong to the whites, are of timber and clay intermixed, and so well covered over with mortar, as to look like square stone<sup>z</sup>. There is one sea-port on this coast, in which the inhabitants make use of a base and ensnaring stratagem to make slaves, by permitting their women to allure men to their embraces, and then accusing them to their husbands; who, feigning to be in the utmost rage for the affront, immediately imprison the gallant, and keep him there till they have an opportunity of selling him to the next stranger that traffics in that way. With the money they buy other female slaves, whom they send upon the same errand. But this is far from being the worst method the inhuman natives of this coast have of making and selling of slaves: there are villains that will go up into the country, with a pretence of jurisdiction, and seize upon men for the slightest offence, and condemn them to be sold for slaves. All the natives of this coast are so void of humanity, that they will betray their nearest relations, and even sell their own children, not only through misery and want, but wantonness, and in exchange for a few

*Its chief  
idol.*

*Idols.*

*Houses.*

*A base way  
o' making  
slaves  
through  
this whole  
country.*

<sup>z</sup> Battel ubi supra. Merol. Voy. p. 607, & seq.

coast, labouring under a great scarcity of wholesome water, make them serve instead of cisterns, to preserve the rain water for their use (1).

(1) Afric. sub Congo & Angola.

European trinkets, or a gallon or two of brandy; and there want not a sufficient number of professed Christians, who make no scruple to encourage that inhuman traffic, and buy all that are offered under that name, without farther enquiry<sup>b</sup>.

*The abada,  
a strange  
creature,  
described.*

We have now mentioned every thing that we could find remarkable concerning this kingdom, excepting only a singular animal, said to be peculiar to it, and called by our geographer abada<sup>i</sup>. It is of the wild kind, very shy and swift-footed, and of the size of a half-grown colt; one horn grows on its forehead, and another on the nape of its neck, the former round, smooth, and hard, about two or three feet in length, sharp at the point, but near the root about the size of a man's leg, bending downward; that on the nape of the neck is flatter and shorter, and of a blackish or dark brown hue, though white when scraped. Its head is not so long in proportion as that of a horse, but shorter and more flat, like that of an ox, only more hairy, and the hair more coarse. Its tail is like that of an ox, though not quite so long; its feet are cloven, like those of a stag, but much thicker. They tell us when the creature is young, its front horn is strait, but that it bends gradually up, like the tusk of an elephant, as it grows older. The natives, who hunt it for the sake of that, and esteem it an excellent antidote, imagine that when it goes to the water to drink, it first dips the tip into it, in order to expel the poison that is in it. They look upon the virtue of it to be greater or less, as the creature is younger or older when it is killed. They make a poultice of the pulverised bones of this creature, mixed with water, which they pretend to be a sovereign remedy against all aches and pains in any part of the body, by drawing away all the peccant humours from the part affected, as well as from the whole mass of the blood<sup>k</sup>.

*Its horn  
esteemed an  
antidote.*

*Poultices  
made of its  
bones.*

<sup>b</sup> Meroll. ubi supra, p. 607.

<sup>i</sup> Dapper, Afric. La Croix, & al.

<sup>k</sup> Purch. Pilgr. & Relat. ubi supra. Pigafet Kongo, lib. ii. cap. 5. Gavasi Kongo, vol. i. p. 56, & seq. & al. sup. citat.



## S E C T. II.

*An Account of the savage Nation of the Giagas ; their first Discovery by the Europeans ; Invasion of Benguela ; Wars, Ravages, barbarous Customs, &c.*

**T**HIS savage nation, which hath spread itself over the greatest part of Lower Ethiopia, is indifferently called by the Europeans, Gagas, Giagas, Giaquas, Jagos, or Jagas, and is, like that of the Arabs, divided into tribes that wander, and those that live in fixed habitations. For though the latter seem to have been originally of the former kind, and to have lived altogether upon ravaging and plundering, yet when they had once enriched themselves, they naturally sought out for a place of rest ; and wherever they met with any fertile and well cultivated provinces, they quickly made them their own, and settled in them, contenting themselves with making excursions on every side, and returning to their families laden with spoil. And hence it is that we find them numerous and powerful in the kingdoms of Matamba, Anzico, Fungueno, and other parts, and particularly in this of Benguela ; where, having first over-run and almost ruined a great part of it, under their warlike chief styled Giaga Kazangi, they at length fixed their habitation in one of the most commodious cantons of it, in which that chief kept his court, in the time of Battel, if we may call by that noble title a monstrous heap of sorry huts of dirt and straw, covering a vast extent of ground, surrounded with a thick thorny hedge, for such was the place of his residence, and that of his successors, under the 7th deg. and half of south latitude.

*An account of the Giagas, and their ravages and conquests in this kingdom.*

This kingdom of Benguela, being the first in which these Giagas were seen by the Europeans, and particularly by Battel, who lived and trafficked a considerable time with them, whilst they were conquering and ravaging some of its richest provinces, we judge this so much the more proper place to give our readers the sum and substance of what he knew of that race from his own report, as he had all proper opportunities of informing himself in many particulars relating to them, which no other European ever had besides, as well as because Benguela was the unfortunate scene of the horrid depredations and conquests they made during his abode with them.

*Battel's traffic and acquaintance with them.*

*His first  
arrival  
among  
them.*

*Reception  
at their  
camp.*

*They in-  
vade Ben-  
guela ;*

*make a  
horrid  
slaughter  
of them.*

On a second trading voyage from Angola to this kingdom, in company with a frigate manned by sixty Portuguese, an English ship having Battel on board, upon their wearing the shore at the cliff of New Benguela, lately described, in 12 deg. of south latitude, observed a numerous camp on the south side of the river Cova, and upon their landing were accosted by about five hundred of them, who came to enquire who they were, and what they came for. Being answered that they came thither to traffick, the Blacks told them in their turn, that they were Jagas, or Ginges, who came from Sierra de Leona, and had passed through the city of Kongo, and travelled eastward of the capital of Angola called Dongo. They were soon after followed by their chief or general, whose curiosity brought him also to the water-side: having never seen any white men before, he welcomed and invited them to bring their commodities on shore. They did so, and loaded their ship with slaves, whom they bought at a cheaper rate than they had ever done on that coast; and being ready to depart, were desired by the chief to let their boat ferry his men over the Cova; his design being to invade Benguela, which bordered on the other side of that river. This being complied with, they were conducted to his camp, where they were furnished with plenty of palm wine, cows, goats, flour, and other provisions, and houses for lodging. The next morning, before day-break, he ordered his gongo, a martial instrument, sounding like a bell, to call his troops together; to whom he declared, in a haughty speech, his resolution to destroy the kingdom of Benguela; upon which they all appeared in arms, and prepared to pass the Cova: in this passage, they met with no small opposition from the enemy, and great numbers were killed on both sides. But this did not hinder the Giagas from getting to the other side by noon. The onset immediately followed at the sound of a great variety of martial instruments; but the Benguelans, unable to withstand the fury of the enemy, were soon either slaughtered or dispersed. Vast numbers of men, women, and children, were brought prisoners to the great Giaga; amongst the former, was found the prince Hombiam Gymba, the chief monarch of that country, with above a hundred of his lords, whose heads were brought and thrown at the feet of the general; then their bodies, and those of all the slain, were collected in order to be dressed and eat by those in-  
human

human cannibals, who prefer that flesh before any other. Here they settled after their victory, and continued about five months; till the want of palm wine, of which they are very fond, obliged them to remove their camp to the province of Bambela, about five day's journey within land.

Battel, during these five months, had made some advantageous trading journies to and from the town of Santo Paulo, and found them encamped at a place called Calicansanba, after they had ravaged and burned every place they had passed through. On his arrival at this new encampment, he met with a fresh welcome from the great Giaga; his camp was plentifully stored with corn, palm-wine, oil, cattle, and all manner of provisions, and his Giagas were wholly taken up with feasting, drinking, dancing, and other diversions. In this state of banquetting and jollity they continued another four months, making now and then some excursions round about, to supply them with fresh plunder and provisions. The terror of their arms had spread far and wide over the country; insomuch that the natives, at the least appearance of their approach, abandoned their habitations, and left nothing behind but empty houses, which the Giagas, in revenge, set on fire. Some of the petty princes, our <sup>1</sup> author tells us, attempted indeed to oppose their fury; but with such ill success, that others, terrified by it, chose to submit, and become tributary to their chief, to avoid a worse fate. At length, after a few months stay in this place, and having probably exhausted the whole country about it of provisions, they resolved to remove to the sierras, or mountains, of Cathincabar, which are of a vast height, and abound with mines of copper. From thence they marched to the river Longo, and having crossed it, fixed their quarters in the town of Calango, where they continued about six months: thence advancing into the province of Tondo, they came to the river Gonza, where the lord of that canton, uncle to the king of Angola, had his capital, a place of great beauty, which they took and burned. Here they found the tomb of the deceased lord, Shillambansa, covered with great store of copper, cloth, and other valuable things, according to the custom of the country; and, what was still more remarkable, a hundred peacocks were kept over it, alive and tame, and

*Horrid  
ravages in  
the pro-  
vince of  
Bambela.*

*Remove  
their camp  
farther to-  
wards the  
coast.*

<sup>1</sup> Purchas, p. 975, & seq. Pigafet, &c.



*On the ri-  
ver Coan-  
za.*

*Battel con-  
tinues  
with them.*

*Is in great  
esteem a-  
mong them.*

*And full  
acquaint-  
ance with  
their cus-  
toms.*

*Battel's de-  
sign of  
leaving  
them.*

were esteemed, on that account, holy birds. From thence they continued their course and horrid depredations as far northward as Coanza, without meeting with any farther opposition, and advanced as far as the mountains of Cambamba, where our author tells us, is a great perpendicular water-fall of that river, whose noise is heard thirty miles off. From this place they were driven by one of the lords named Longere, to the territory of a powerful and warlike prince, who seven years before had given a signal overthrow to the Portugnese, killed eight hundred of them, and forty thousand of their Negro soldiers and allies. This brave lord strenuously opposed the Giagas, and had a most furious engagement with them, after which the enemy thought fit to fortify themselves in their camp, with a strong pallisado of trees, behind the fence of which they remained some months, not without making frequent sallies against him, and committing many hostilities in his territory. All this while Battel continued with them, and was in such high favour with the grand Giaga, on account of the frequent services he did him with his musket against an enemy (for neither his men, nor any of the natives, knew any thing of the use of fire-arms) that, upon every engagement, he gave special charge to his best soldiers to take all possible care of him; they accordingly saved him from many imminent dangers, by carrying him away in their arms. It was by means of this long abode with those savages, and the confidence and friendship of their chief, that he became so much better acquainted with their manners and customs, than any other European. The only thing he was excluded from observing, was when the great Giaga was consulting his mokisso, or devil, about any new enterprise or expedition; at which time his conjurers obliged him to withdraw; telling him, that his presence was displeasing to that spirit: though even of this conjuring he found means to learn some of the chief ceremonies from the other Giagas, the substance of which, and other particulars relating to their religion, martial discipline, and barbarous customs, we shall now subjoin. Being tired with his long abode with these cannibals, he resolved at all hazards to give them the slip; and executing his design, though not without great difficulties and dangers, got safe into the kingdom of Loango, where we shall find him again in the sequel.

The camp or army of this great Giaga, whom Battel calls Imba Calandola, consisted of twenty thousand men, com-

commanded by twelve captains under him; each of these had the charge of one of the gates of the camp, whilst he himself kept his pavilion or residence; well entrenched, in the center. He was a man of great courage, but undertook nothing without previous enchantments, and consulting his devil by sacrifices; by which means he pretended to fore-know the event of his enterprises, and that he should never die but in the war. On such occasions he rises before day-break, and sits on a stool, attended by two of his conjurers, one on each side, about forty or fifty women standing in a circle round him, waving and flourishing a zovarus, or horse's tail, and singing. In the center is kindled a great fire, and an earthen pot set over it, with some white powder or paint, wherewith his conjurers daub his forehead, temples, breast, and belly, with long-winded ceremonies, which continue till sun-set; at which time they bring him his casengala, or hatchet, and put it into his hands, bidding him be strong against his enemies, for the mokisso is with him. A male child is then brought to him, which he immediately kills; next to that, four men are brought to him in the same manner; two of whom he slays, and orders the other two to be killed without the camp. In like manner he orders ten cows to be killed, five within, and five without the camp, with the same number of goats and dogs; their blood is then sprinkled on the fire, and their flesh eaten, with great festivity and triumph. The same ceremonies are likewise used by the inferior captains of the army, upon the like account; but neither they nor their chief make use of idols on these or any other occasions, but pretend that the mokisso frequently appears and speaks to them<sup>e</sup>.

*Their method of consulting their mokisso.*

The great Giaga Calango, wore his hair very long, braided with many knots full of bambas, a kind of sea-shells, of great value among them; he wore a collar about his neck of masoes, another sort of shell found upon that coast, and of great price likewise. About his waist he had a girdle made of ostrich's eggs, and round his middle a palm-cloth as fine as silk. His body was carved and cut with various figures, and every day anointed with human fat. He had a piece of copper two inches long, which hung across his nose, and one at each ear; and his body was painted with red and white. He had about thirty wives, who followed him when he went

*Grand Giagas dress.*

<sup>e</sup> Purchas, ubi supra, § iii. p. 976, & seq. Pigafet, & al.

abroad ; one of whom carried his bow and arrows, and four of them his cups and drinking utensils : whenever he drank, they all kneeled down, and clapped their hands, and sang. He kept his men under the strictest discipline, and if any soldier turned his back to the enemy, he was condemned to death, and his body eaten.

*Manner of  
encamping.*

The Giagas neither sowed corn, nor bred cattle ; but lived wholly on the plunder of the country, and abandoned it as soon as it was exhausted. What was still worse they destroyed all that they could not carry away, particularly the noble palm-trees, with which this kingdom abounds, by greedily draining them, as long as they had any liquor left, so that they withered and perished soon after : whereas the natives always take care to leave a sufficient quantity of it to keep them alive, and in condition to furnish them with a fresh supply, both of that, and of its most beneficial fruit, from one season to another.

Those horrid devastations, joined to their inhuman treatment of all their captives, they knew had rendered them so detested to the Benguelans, that they dared not venture to rest in any place, though but for one night, without fortifying their camp with a strong palisade ; and for this service they had always a sufficient number of stout men appointed, who completed it with surprising dexterity and expedition. When they resolved to make a longer stay than usual, they never failed of lining their cincture with a thick hedge of thorns, to guard them from lions and other wild beasts. This precinct had commonly twelve gates, each commanded by one of their twelve chiefs, and guarded by a sufficient number of men ; their tents or houses were regularly pitched, and pretty close to each other ; at the entrance of which each fighting man left his zarabhe, bow and arrows, and other weapons, so that the whole camp was ready, on the least alarm, to fall out completely armed. On these, and all other occasions, they fall on and fight with the most desperate bravery ; knowing, that it is certain death to turn their backs to the enemy, and that a still more dreadful fate attends those that fall into their hands. They have another effectual way of breeding up their young soldiery to this martial intrepidity ; these not being their own offspring, but that of such captives as they make in their excursions ; for though they allow themselves to have many women, and these no less fertile than those of other African nations, yet they never suffer any of them to rear up the children, but order them to be buried alive

*Destroy all  
their chil-  
dren.*

as soon as born. In lieu of these, they make choice of such as are the most promising, from among those of their prisoners, to be trained up to arms, and to supply their army with recruits. In Battel's time, a little after their departure from Sierra Leona, they had not above twelve natural or original Giagas left alive in their whole camp; the rest being all the offspring of their captives of both sexes. These they commonly chose at about the age of twelve or thirteen, the females for procreation, and the males for war. A youth was no sooner inrolled, than he had a collar hung about his neck, in token of slavery, which was to be worn till he brought home the head of an enemy. Then it was publicly taken off, and the young warrior declared a freeman of the cannibal commonwealth. The rest of the captive-train of both sexes were inhumanly reserved to be killed and eaten, not in time of scarcity of cattle and other provisions, but out of cruel wantonness, and in preference to all other flesh. This privilege of being accounted men, and freed from their badge of slavery, seldom failed of inspiring the youths with an uncommon ambition to attain it at all hazards, and to face the greatest dangers; and it was by this method that they kept up their number complete, and the fierce savage nature of the Giagan republic from degenerating into humanity and compassion.

*Manner of  
supplying  
them by  
those of  
their cap-  
tives.*

Their manner of burying their dead, especially those of the male kind, is not without some manifest tokens of their savage cruelty. The deceased is not only washed, anointed, and bedecked with all his most valuable finery, but accompanied into the other world by two of his most beloved women, who are conveyed with him to his grave, with their arms broken. The body is carried to the grave in a chair, between two men, and placed in it as if still alive, and the two women, one on each side of it: as soon as they are thus deposited, the grave, which is commonly a deep vault, is covered on the top with earth; and the relations, who are there present, sprinkle it with the blood of slain goats and palm wine, and make a funeral lamentation. Those of higher rank are interred with more pomp, and the ceremonies and libations reiterated a longer or shorter number of days, and weeks, according to their quality. The natives of Benguela bury their dead much after the same manner; and those of the richer sort, with their most valuable goods, weapons, utensils, and apparel; performing many more superstitious ceremonies over their graves than are in use even among the

*Giagas  
manner of  
burying.*

*Among the  
Bengue-  
lans.*



the Giagas. They think it the greatest happiness to leave behind them many relations, to repeat and prolong those funeral rites; and, on that account, none are reckoned so miserable as those who leave no kindred behind them, to perform that office for them, which some of the near survivors among them think themselves bound to continue, at proper seasons, as long as they live: but what is still more surprising, though they pay such a singular regard to their deceased friends, yet not one of them will shew the least pity or concern for them in their sickness, but abandon and flee from them as from a plague, and leave them to expire in that miserable and destitute condition.

*Gold found  
on the shore.*

All that we have to add, with relation to the Giagas, is, that in this encampment, which was but three days journey from Mafangano, where the Portuguese have a fort, they fell in with a river, a little to the southward of the Baya das Vaccas, in which they found great plenty of gold. This they gathered in large grains, which were washed down by the stream, and lay scattered on the sand; they made no other use of it, however, than to inlay the handles of their hatchets, in the same manner as others were done with copper, which they look upon as the most valuable metal of the two.

Thus far goes Battel's account of the savage Giagas, whom he left in this encampment, to go over to the Portuguese. How long they remained in this unhappy country after his departure, and what farther depredations they committed, we cannot pretend to explain.



## C H A P. XLVIII.

### *The History of Western Ethiopia.*

*The division of  
Western  
Ethiopia.*

THIS country is also called Southern, because it is situated on the south side, or rather south-west side of Abyssinia: and, on the same account, some authors likewise give it the epithet of Exterior, and Inferior, in opposition to the other, which is called Interior and Su-

perior Ethiopia. But it is most commonly known by that of Southern, from its lying on the south side of the line, with respect to Guinea, and other parts of Africa, which lie on the north side of the Equator. What extent and boundaries the ancient geographers gave to it we have formerly shewn. The Portuguese, who first discovered this vast tract, extended the coasts of it from cape Gonzales, or De Lopez Gonzales, in thirty minutes south latitude, to cape Negro, under sixteen degrees twenty-two minutes of the same; containing near fifteen degrees, or near three hundred leagues. They tell us, that all this vast tract, which extended likewise, where broadest, about ten degrees of longitude, or two hundred leagues from east to west, was formerly under one prince or monarch, called mani, who governed many provinces of it by his sonas, or viceroys, whilst he gave his own name of Kongo to the whole realm, and was styled Mani Kongo, *sovereign, or emperor of Kongo*<sup>a</sup>. *Situation and extent.*

In process of time, these viceroys, or governors, grew powerful and wealthy enough to set up for themselves, and became petty tyrants of their own particular governments: then they began to assume the title and quality of mani, insomuch that the true and original sovereign found it difficult to preserve that part which he governed in person, and which was more properly called Kongo; whilst, instead of only one Mani Kongo, there started up a number of other petty manis, such as the Mani Dongo, Mani Loango, Mani Caconda, Mani Bengo, Mani Sonho, and several others, of whom we shall have occasion to speak in the sequel. At present we shall confine ourselves to three of the principal, namely, Kongo Proper, Loango on the north, and Angola, or Dongo, on the south. *Ancient government under one sovereign.*

# S E C T. I.

## The Kingdom of Kongo.

Kongo Proper, is bounded on the north by the famed river Zair, or Zarah, which divides it from that of Loango on that side; on the south by that of Danda, which separates it from the kingdom of Angola; on the east, by the kingdoms of Fungono and Metamba, and the burnt mountains of the sun, those of crystal or salt- *Kongo Proper, its extent and limits.*

<sup>a</sup> Vide Odo, Lopez, Pigafet, Descr. Reg. Cong. Davity, Dapper, & al.

petre and silver, and by the rivers Verbelá and Chilánda; and on the west by the Ethiopic sea, called also the sea of Kongo<sup>a</sup>. According to these limits, Kongo Proper extends, on that side, about three degrees from north to south; that is, from the mouth of the Zair to that of the Danda, or from six to nine degrees south latitude, but widens much within land, by the course of the first of those rivers, which runs winding above two degrees more towards the north. We are more in the dark still about its breadth from east to west, for want of being better acquainted with the true situation and course of the mountains and rivers which bound it on the east.

*Not well known to-ward the east.*

*Kongo Proper shrunk from its ancient extent since the introduction of Christianity.*

According to the relation of John Anthony Cavazzi de Monte Cuculo, a capuchin friar, who was sent missionary into these parts, the dominions of the kings of Kongo extended a great deal farther eastward and southward, before the introduction of the Christian religion; a great number of those estates that were under its monarchs, either as subjects, or tributary, having withdrawn their allegiance, out of dislike to them upon that account. Most of them, especially towards the east, being of a wild and untractable nature, and living in woody and rocky mountains, difficult of access, refused not only to exchange their old superstitions and idolatry for the Christian religion, but likewise to pay any farther allegiance or tribute to a prince, who had embraced it out of complaisance to strangers. Not content to oppose his officers and troops that came annually to raise the usual tribute, they made such frequent and powerful incursions into his dominions, both from the east and south, as obliged him to draw his forces nearer the center of his kingdom of Kongo, to prevent its being invaded; by which means so many of the remote provinces were dismembered, that Kongo was reduced from above six hundred leagues in circuit, to less than one half of that extent.

*Excessive hot climates.*

*Their seasons.*

Kongo Proper, being situate under the torrid zone, is of course subject to the same excessive heats that all those countries are liable to; intolerable indeed to strangers, but rendered less grievous to the inhabitants, by the winds and breezes, rains and constant dews, which greatly abate their violence. Perhaps it may be necessary to apprise our readers, that these regions, being on the other side of the line, their seasons are opposite to those on this side; their summer, for instance, begins when our winter

<sup>a</sup> Ob. Lopez, Pigafet, Jarric. & al. sup. citat.



commences; and so of the rest. From the month of October till February and March, the sun's rays dart with such force, that the atmosphere appears to an European as it were in a flame. But this is likewise mitigated by the equal length of their days and nights; which would be intolerable, were that luminary to continue longer than twelve hours upon it, and not be refreshed by an equal number of hours of the night.

*Equal days and nights.*

As their summer lasts six whole months, though with some difference of the degrees of heat, according as the sun is more or less vertical, so their winter is reckoned by them the other part of the year, with a proportionable difference of cold, or what they call so; though it is what an European would style warm or hot. These two seasons of winter and summer, which make up their year, they divide into six less considerable ones, which they call massanza, neasu, ecundi, quitombo, quibiso, and quimbangala.

*Summer and winter.*

*Other division of the seasons.*

Massanza enters with the month October, which is the beginning of their spring, when the rains begin to fall, and continue during the two, and sometimes the three next months. In this season, the low lands are commonly overflowed by the extraordinary floods, and all their product swept away and destroyed: this disaster is commonly followed by a famine, which carries off great numbers of the lazy and indolent inhabitants, who take no care to lay up any provisions against such calamities, though they happen so frequently. This first season they reckon commences at the time the plants begin to pul-  
lulate.

*The first, or spring.*

The second, called neasu, begins about the end of January, when the green fields and lands have shot their product to their full height, and want but a few days to ripen them fit for harvest; which the natives have no sooner gathered in than they begin immediately to sow them a-fresh for a second crop; their lands commonly yielding them two harvests<sup>b</sup>.

*The second followed by harvest and new sowing.*

The third and fourth seasons, called ecundi and quitombo, are frequently blended towards the beginning of March, when the more gentle rains begin to fall, and continue till the month of May. It is the greater or lesser quantity of rain that falls during that interval, which distinguishes those two seasons: during the rest of the time,

*The third or fourth autumn.*

<sup>b</sup> Od Lopez, Pigafet, Jarric, Davity, Dapper, Labat ex Cavazzi Ethiop. vol. i. cap. 2, & seq.

the air is either very clear, dry, and hot to a high degree; or, if the clouds are over-charged, they commonly are inflamed, and burst out into the most dreadful lightnings and thunders, without shedding the least drop of rain, though they seem loaded with it. These two seasons last till about the beginning, and sometimes till the end of our September.

*The two  
last, or  
winter.*

The two last, viz. the quibiso and quimbangala, make up their short winter; this consists not in frost and snow, which are never seen here, nor any-where under these climates, but in dry blasting winds, which strip the earth and all the trees of their verdure, till the next massanza, which is their spring, begins to restore them to their vernal bloom.

*Division of  
the year  
into twelve  
months,  
whence.*

They divide the year into twelve lunar months, and begin it in September, like the Jews; and, whether by intercalary days or months, like them, they bring it to so near an exactness, as not to anticipate or retard the beginning of it, which falls, like our's, on the autumnal equinox.

*Of the  
week into  
four days.*

But if they had received this division of the year from either the Abyssinians or Jews, it is more than probable they would likewise have followed that of the months and weeks, and made this last to consist of seven days, whereas their week contains but four days; three of which are appointed for work, and the fourth for rest and religious exercises.

*Fertility  
and pro-  
duct.*

It is to the most shameful indolence in the natives, that we may ascribe the small product they reap from their lands; which, were they better cultivated, and fenced from inundations, might be made capable of yielding more plentiful harvests, and a much greater variety of grain, pulse, fruits, and other nourishment. The vast and regular rains which constantly fall in their due season, and the mud which is left by the inundation of their rivers, were they properly improved by industry, would not fail of enriching their low lands, which would yield a double, and sometimes a triple crop yearly. But the negroes are averse to labour: they seem to think it below them to use any exercises but those of dancing, leaping, hunting, and shooting: the rest of their time they spend in smoking and downright idleness, and commit the laborious part of their household affairs, such as digging, sowing, reaping, cutting wood, grinding corn, and fetching water, to their slaves, or for want of such, to their wives. Though they have plenty of domestic animals, which they might easily make

*Extreme  
indolence.*

*The heavy  
slavery of  
their  
wives.*

make use of, both for cultivating their grounds, and other laborious services; and though they see the Portuguese do it to great advantage, yet their stupid indolence is such, that they will rather see their tender females sink under their toil and labour, than be at the trouble of breeding up any of these useful creatures to their assistance.

Their ground produces variety of grain, though no corn or rice but what is cultivated by the Portuguese. We begin with their maize, otherwise called Turkey or Indian wheat, which grows very strong and well laden; of this the natives make their bread; and as it takes little more from its sowing to its full perfection than three months, they seldom fail of two crops of it; nay, some of those which are ever so little cultivated, will, with industry and forecast, yield even a third. This grain, being well ground, is made into a kind of coarse bread, or is boiled in water into a pap. They likewise cultivate another sort not unlike it, which they call massambola, or maubella, and which the Portuguese style Saracen wheat or bread; they never fail of two crops of it every year, as it will thrive in a dry season better than the former. A third kind they sow which they call massingo, not unlike our millet, but much larger and plumper, and with a more agreeable taste and flavour; but it is apt to give the colic to those who have not been used to it, either by reason of some inherent windiness, or as they pretend, by its being too nourishing, and hard of digestion. But this ill quality seldom affects any but Europeans, the natives having stomachs of ostriches, able to digest the hardest food. They have still a fourth sort of grain, which they call luno, of a triangular form, something like what the Dutch call buck, and we French wheat; it is smaller than the Indian, but much more strengthening and nourishing. Their country yields plenty of it, which makes some amends for their want of industry.

They also cultivate variety of pulse, as beans and pease, which likewise constitute part of their food; among the bean sort, they have a small kind, of a reddish hue, which they call noalla, and are very fond of; it is of a very good flavour and taste, when dressed a little more elegantly than these poor natives generally do. They have another sort which they call nitanza, commonly known by the name of Brasil bean, because it was probably brought hither from thence by the Portuguese. It is reckoned very good at the first, but is apt to degenerate in time; however, the curious know how to prevent that defect; but this kind

*Divers sort of grain. Indian wheat.*

*A second sort of it.*

*A third grain of a windy nature.*

*A triangular sort.*

*Various kinds of pulse. The red bean.*

*Brasil bean.*



bears little or no value among them, and is only in use among the Portuguese, who can have a fresh supply of it from year to year.

*Variety of  
pease.*

Of the pease kind, that which is called *ouvado* is very small, and grows upon a low shrub, which blossoms and yields its fruit all the year round, and will last three whole years. Some of the same kind are to be found in several islands of America, which bear seven whole years<sup>t</sup>. That which is called *jucuba* is likewise small, and of a whitish hue, but difficult to be boiled tender; this kind, it seems, grows under ground, in a kind of pod or purse. It bears a yellow flower, in scent much like a violet; the pease itself, if boiled soft, have a fine taste, and sit light upon the stomach. But what the natives of Kongo more commonly live upon, and which suits their palate as well as their idle disposition, is a kind of nuts like our filberds, which grow of themselves, and are to be found every where; every nut that falls upon the ground, producing a new shrub by the next year<sup>u</sup>.

*Fruit-trees  
brought  
thither by  
the Por-  
tuguese.*

They have scarce any fruit trees but what have been transplanted thither by the Portuguese, and multiplied themselves in time; all the rest are wild, without blossom or fruit, or any thing but their leaves, which afford indeed a constant verdure, because the new buds spring up as fast as the old leaves drop off. The palm-trees grow here in great number and variety; they reckon no less than eight sorts of them, all of excellent use in their kind. But as most of them are exotic, and brought thither from America, we shall postpone what we have to say of them, till we have given an account of those which are natural to the country.

*The ali-  
conda tree.*

We begin with that which they call *aliconda*, a tree of such monstrous bulk that ten men cannot fathom it round; the natives who call it *bondo*, say that it is fit only to kill men and beasts, its wood being easy to rot, and becoming so exceedingly brittle, that a hard blast of wind will throw them down; for which reason they never build their huts near them, lest their fall should crush them to death, or their fruit, which is of the bigness of a large gourd, and easily broken from the tree, should knock them down. They nevertheless make some advantage of both; the bark of this tree, being well beaten and maccrated, yields a coarse thread, of which they make their strong ropes;

<sup>t</sup> Labat's Voyage into the American Isles.  
tom. i. cap. 7. & al. *supra* citat.

<sup>u</sup> Id. ex Cavaz.

and if it is macerated in water some days, and, when dried again, beaten with iron bars, or large clubs of hard wood, it becomes like a large piece of cloth, with which, though coarse, and of no duration, the natives cover their middle from the girdle to the knees. The shell or rind of the fruit, which is hard and tough, like that of a gourd, or calabash, being cleared of its pulp (which when dried yields an insipid meal, and may, in time of scarcity, be made into a thick and nourishing pap) serves for vessels of several uses, and proper to preserve water in, to which it gives a pleasant aromatic taste. The small leaves are often eaten in time of scarcity, and the large ones serve to cover houses; or being burned, to make good soap.

The insanda resembles, in many respects, our laurel; *The insanda tree.* and its bark, being beaten and macerated like that of the aliconda, is also made into a kind of stuff or cloth, but much finer, and is in greater esteem among them. Persons of the highest rank, and even monarchs, wear it about their shoulders like cloaks; and use it for girdles about their middle. Even the women of all degrees are fond of wearing it in the same manner, and embellish their heads with it, adding other ornaments and trinkets, more or less rich, according to their condition.

The mulemba is not unlike it, resembling what we call *The mulemba.* the royal laurel; its leaves are evergreen, and from its bark is made a cloth or stuff, which exceeds the former in beauty.

The manglos commonly thrive best along the Coanza, *Manglos multiply into forests.* Danda, and other rivers, and even by the sea-side, and in marshy grounds. Some filaments shoot downwards from their branches, and taking fresh root in the earth, grow up again into new trees; insomuch that one single trunk may in time become a forest, like many others of a like kind, which grow in Asia and America in great quantities. The *The mesica.* mesica grows as large as our walnut-trees, and out of its wood drops a medicinal gum, of a warm nature. The *Colleua.* colleva is likewise very large, and bears a fruit like a citron, but much bigger, whose kernels, about the size of a small nut, are reckoned to strengthen the stomach, they being so bitter, that the negroes are obliged to soak them in water before they can eat them. The zaffo is tall and *Zaffo.* large like our oaks, and produces a fruit not unlike some of our largest plumbs, and of the colour of fire. These being roasted in hot embers, yield an aromatic scent, and are reckoned great strengtheners of the brain. The cassanevo's leaves, which are like those of our laurel, and green *Cassanevo.*



*Its gum.**Thegegera.**The niceſſo.*

all the year, produce a kind of resin of an exquisite smell; its fruit, like our wild crabs, yields a very sour verjuice, disagreeable to the taste, but an excellent remedy against fluxes and catarrhs, and a disease very common in Kongo, which covers the whole body with ulcers. From this tree, instead of blossoms, issues a yellow gum, which, when roasted, is eaten with pleasure and safety, but when raw is very prejudicial to the stomach, being of such a caustic nature, that it will raise a blister or an ulcer wherever it touches the naked flesh. The gegegera is a fine stout tree, whose fruit, not unlike a ripe orange, but of an oblong shape, yields a liquor very agreeable to the taste, and good for the stomach. The niceſſo, called by the natives of Angola maongio-acamburi, is about six feet high, and produces a very large fruit, not unlike a pine-apple. The rind incloses from one hundred to two hundred oblong bodies, like small lemons, but of an exquisite taste, exceeding that of the finest melons; it begins to appear laden with it a few months after it hath sprung out of the earth, and keeps bearing successively all the year round, so that one sees them in all their different degrees of maturity, some quite, some half ripe, some green, and some just budding. The cola, or, as the negroes call it, the toglow, is a fruit of such fine relish, and so much admired in this country, that the natives are seldom without some of it in their mouths, and chew it as the Indians to their betel.

*Various kinds of palm trees.*

The last native plant we shall mention, is that which they call purgera, of the height of a filberd-tree, from whose nuts they press an excellent medicinal oil, which, burned in a lamp, yields a most agreeable scent.

Kongo produces eight or nine sorts of palms; the most common of them is that whose fruit, like our pine-apples, contains a vast number of kernels of the breadth of a filberd, and of an exquisite taste when full ripe; the oil that is extracted out of them is likewise very pleasant, and used in cookery instead of butter; about the trunk of the tree grows a soft downy kind of moss, with which the rich commonly stuff their pillows. The Giagas apply it to their wounds, with good success. Most of the Moors cover their houses with the leaves of this palm-tree, which are very broad, strong, and lasting; its wood would be no less useful for building, if the negroes had but the art of sawing it for that purpose. They draw from these trees, by incision, a pleasant liquor not unlike wine, which turns sour in five or six days\*.

\* Linschöt, Pigafet, Lopez, Davity, Dapper, Labat, & al.

The second, which is not so tall, grows best in watery ground, and produces much such a liquor as the former, though not quite so good : its fruit grows downwards, the kernel is delicious, and rind hard and smooth, and fit to be made into tobacco-boxes, and other such trinkets. The third is the coco palm-tree, too well known in the East and West Indies to need a farther description. 4. That which they call jamata bears excellent dates, and might produce very good wine, but the incision is apt to hurt the tree. 5. The matoba, which yields a pleasant wine, but it is apt to spoil the stomach and blood, by reason of its acidity. 6. The smaller palm-tree, which yields much the same kind of pleasant, though unwholesome liquor, is hurtful to the Europeans, though not to the natives who are accustomed to it. 7. The coccata, the fruit of which is of the bigness of one of our large melons, and yields a very pleasant food and liquor, and some oil ; the pulp, mixed with sugar, may be made into an excellent jelly. 8. The Kongo palm tree, so styled because it thrives better in that country than any of the former sorts ; its liquor is reckoned as valuable as the wine which comes from Europe, though it is rather a kind of milk, sweet and agreeably tart, but will grow sour in three or four days, and is so strong and heady, that a pint of it will produce intoxication. If no incision be made in this tree, to extract the liquor above mentioned, there will grow at the foot of its root some leaves, and a large fruit big enough to load a man. Its rind is hard and prickly, and the inside not unlike a peeled chefnut, in colour, taste, and substance ; this, when roasted, is the common food of the poorer sort, to whom it costs nothing but the trouble of fetching it from the woods. They likewise extract a fat oil by dint of boiling, with which they dress their victuals ; but the Europeans only use it to burn in their lamps. The last sort is that which they call maongir and macebecco, a kind of banana, which grows in Kongo and Angola in pretty large quantities, and need not be here described.

*The liquor  
drawn  
from it.*

*Its fruit  
near the  
root.*

*Oil drawn  
from it.*

They have likewise variety of shrubs of different heights, which yield very pleasant fruits, fit for those hot climes, but a detail of them would be too tedious. One of them, which they call capano, or the *fig of hell*, produces a kind of nut, out of which they extract an oil for the lamp, and this they likewise use in the composition of their ointments and plasters. The leaves of the shrub, burnt to ashes,

*Fig of hell.*

† Pigafet, Davity, Dapper, Cavazzi, Labat, & al. ubi supra.

make

*The conde  
or count.*

make a good lye, with which the natives wash their bodies. The conde, or count, a title given in all likelihood to a tree pretty common in Kongo, Angola, and Loango, and hardly any where else to be found, is of two sorts; the one pushes its branches upwards to a point, and out of their stem grows a fruit of an ash colour, in figure like a man's fist clenched. The inside is full of partitions like the pine-apple; but, instead of kernels, is filled with a white thickish juice, which, when condensed, is like new cheese in colour and substance, but melts in the mouth, hath a pleasant taste and flavour, and is refreshing to the stomach and bowels: its seeds, which are of a blackish hue, and in size like those of a cucumber, are reckoned great coolers of the blood. The second species of conde is not much unlike the first, though the substance of its fruit is neither so white nor soft, but exceeds it in lustre and flavour.

Besides these, the Portuguese have taken care to plant several other fruits, as oranges, lemons, citrons, granates, cedars, and others, which thrive as well as in their natural soil.

Vines have been likewise brought hither from Candia, and where they are well cultivated, as in the gardens belonging to the capuchin friars, thrive to admiration, and yield excellent grapes twice a year. It is not so with the rest, which, for want of due care, run into leaves and branches, and the fruit seldom comes to its full ripeness; this neglect is, it seems, common in all their conquered dominions, and is owing partly to the fear of hurting the Portuguese wine trade, and partly to prevent the abuse of it among the Moors, who are much given to drinking it, and all other strong liquors, to excess<sup>2</sup>.

*Aromatic  
plants.*

Among those that are of the aromatic kind, we shall only mention the two principal. 1. The dondo, a shrub, which is said to have the taste, smell, and every other quality of the cinnamon, and is used by the natives and Portuguese here instead of it. 2. The inquosso, a kind of creeping vine, which bears a great multitude of small clusters, whose seeds are of the size of the coriander, but have the scent, taste, and strength of pepper. They are used instead thereof, in their cookery, as well as in their physical compositions, and are found to have double their warmth and virtue. It cannot be expected that we should particularise the vast variety of other trees, shrubs, plants, herbs and roots, of the medicinal kind, which grow na-

*Roots.*

<sup>2</sup> Cavazzi ap. Labat. tom. i. cap. 8.



turally in this country, some yielding odoriferous gums, others oils, berries, and seeds. Among the last, we shall take notice of the manioc, of which they make a good sort of bread, and is the same used in other parts of Asia and America; the potatoes, tambas, juganas, and others of the like kind, which yield a good taste and nourishment. Wheat is the only grain which the ground will not produce; it pushes forth indeed the straw and ear, the former of which grows high enough, we are told, to hide a man on horseback, but the latter is unfilled.

*Wheat  
sown yields  
no grain.*

The grass likewise in their low lands grows so high, thick, and rank, that it becomes one of the most dangerous receptacles for a great variety of wild and voracious beasts, and venomous insects. This circumstance makes travelling exceedingly hazardous, as they have very few beaten roads in the whole country, and travellers are obliged to march through vast plains, in continual danger of rousing some of the former, or being bit to death by the latter, to say nothing of the vast unwholesome dews with which that grass is covered, during some part of the day, which wet both blacks and whites to the skin, and cause colds, colics, and other grievous disorders, especially in the latter, who go almost naked, and are more easily affected. The only way they have of guarding against that nuisance, is to set the grass on fire in the hot weather, when it is quite parched by the heat of the sun; but even this cannot be done without the greatest danger, because both the wild beasts and venomous reptiles, being furiously roused from their retirement by the flames, will fly at all they meet in their way, though in ever such numerous companies; and there is no other way of avoiding their fury, but by climbing up the tallest trees, and making a vigorous defence with fire arms, or other weapons. In this case the natives have a much better chance, who naturally climb up the highest trees with surprising agility; whereas the whites are forced to make use of rope-ladders, which they commonly cause their blacks to carry about them against such emergencies, and to go up and fasten one end of them to some of the branches. We shall conclude this article of the product of these countries with a short account of their flowers, which, though wild, and negligently scattered by nature, in almost every field and grove, yet yield a much nobler and more delightful prospect than those which we, with so much care and cost, cultivate in our gardens. They seem indeed here to have lost their natural fragrancy in the day-time, that being

*Grass  
grows to a  
great  
height.  
The dan-  
ger of tra-  
velling on  
that ac-  
count.*

ing in some measure wholly exhaled by the too intense and immoderate heat of the sun ; but this is amply compensated after its setting, and more especially a little before its rising, when their sweetness is again condensed, and revived by the coldness and dews of the night, after which they exhale their various refreshing scents in a much higher degree than our's.

*Wild lilies.  
Tulips of  
exquisite  
variety  
grow by  
dozens on  
one stalk.*

Thus the lilies, which naturally grow in great plenty in the fields, vallies, and woods, excel those of our gardens, not only in their extreme whiteness, but much more in a delightful fragrancy, without offending the head. The tulips, which there grow wild, though they are generally called *Perfic*, have something so surprisngly charming in the variety and combination of their colours, that they dazzle the eyes of the beholder ; neither do their flowers grow singly, but with ten or twelve upon one stalk, and with this double advantage over our's, that they diffuse a very reviving and agreeable sweetness, and continue much longer in their full bloom. Of the same nature are their tuberoses, hyacinths, and other native flowers, which spring up in vast groups of one hundred and two hundred from one root, though somewhat smaller than our's, some of them finely variegated, and all of them yielding an agreeable odour.

*Tuberoses,  
&c.*

*Roses and  
jessamines  
brought  
from Eu-  
rope or  
America.*

Their roses and jessamines, and some other exotics brought hither from Europe or America, come up likewise in as great perfection, but require a constant supply of water, and diligent attendance, to prevent their degenerating ; the American jessamine in particular, instead of single flowers, will grow up by dozens in a bunch ; some of them of an exquisite white, and others of the colour of the most vivid fire <sup>a</sup>.

*Principal  
rivers of  
Kongo Pro-  
per.  
The Zair.*

We come now to speak of the most considerable rivers which fertilise Kongo, properly now so called ; the first and most considerable of which is the Zaira, or Zair, which divides it from the province of Loango on the north, and is emphatically styled by the natives the Great River, and the river of Kongo. It is indeed worthy particular notice, not only on account of its largeness, rapidity, and number of islands, and the vast tract of land it overflows at particular seasons, when it looks more like a sea than a river, but especially because our modern geographers have written so variously about its source and course, attributing to it the same origin with the famous river Nile ; and, after

<sup>a</sup> Pigafet, Davity, Dapper, & al.



a long and almost opposite course to that, making it discharge its rapid torrent into the Ethiopic, as the other doth into the Mediterranean sea. It must be indeed owned, that we know as yet very little, if any thing, of its real source or course; neither doth it begin to take the name of Zair till about one hundred and sixty leagues, or eight degrees, above the place where it falls into the ocean; from whence it flows with great rapidity in a course westward, bending a little to the south, without receiving any considerable rivers.

*Its source  
not yet  
known.*

Those that fall into it before, and which seem to form it, rather than be received into it, are the Bancaro, Vambra, Coango, and Barbela or Vervel; all of them pretty considerable, but especially the Coango, which springs from, or rather runs through, the lake of Kilanda, or Aquilon-da, after it hath passed through the kingdom of Metamba, and continuing its course in an almost northward direction, joins the two former above mentioned, after having crossed a tract of above hundred and forty leagues from its supposed spring head, in the territory of Giaga, or Cazzangi, to its fall into the Bancaro. The Vambra or Umbra springs out of the mountains, which part the kingdom of Lungono from that of Numeramai, or Mano-emugi; its course is almost due west, and is supposed to be about one hundred and ten leagues. The Bancaro comes down from the territory of Macoco or Anzico; and its course, before it falls into the Vambra, is about eighty leagues west-and-by south, and twenty leagues lower is joined by the Coango.

*Rivers that  
fall into it.*

*The Coan-  
go's spring  
and course.*

*The Vam-  
bra.*

*The Ban-  
caro.*

These are the chief rivers which form the Zair, which runs about forty leagues lower before its first cataract, which is the most considerable of all, though it hath several lesser falls before it discharges itself into the ocean. These cascades joined to its natural rapidity, the vast number of rocks and islands which lie scattered at small distances, and the sea-horses, crocodiles, monstrous serpents, and other destructive creatures, which swarm in them, render the navigation of it exceedingly difficult and dangerous. The mouth of it, to which some give three, and some five or more leagues in breadth, discharges such a vast and rapid torrent, that the boldest and most experienced pilots sail into it with fear and dread; neither is any wind strong enough to force the ships upwards against the stream, let them make all the sail they can, or employ ever so many hands at the oar. The only way they have, is to take the advantage of the repercussion which those

*The Zair  
dangerous  
and difficult  
to navi-  
gate.*

those rocks and islands give to the waves, the same which we observe the piers of a bridge to cause in the stream, whilst the current runs with its usual swiftness through the arches. But this requires singular care and industry, and is seldom done without great danger <sup>b</sup>.

*Islands at  
the mouth  
of it.*

The foremost of these islands, between which the Zair discharges its waters at seven different large channels into the sea, are inhabited by Moors; and are planted by them, especially about the coasts, with some of those trees we lately mentioned, of whose leaves they make a coarse kind of cloth: and it is by the recoil which the stream meets with from each of them, that vessels are as it were tossed forward against the current, they being set very thick and near to each other all the way up. But a great number of them are wholly desert, and a receptacle for the voracious creatures above mentioned, which prey indifferently on men, beasts, and fishes, and cause horrid devastations both on the water and the land.

*Method of  
sailing a-  
gainst the  
stream.*

*The Zair  
overflows.*

We have already hinted that the Zair overflows at some seasons vast tracts of ground, and by its rapidity carries almost every thing before it. We shall only add one observation more upon those floods; viz. that they happen here in a quite contrary season to that of the inundation of Egypt; which is on the opposite side of the line: an evident proof, that the Zair and Nile flow from different spring-heads, vastly distant from each other <sup>c</sup>.

*The Dando.*

The next in rank is the Dando, which parts Kongo Proper from the kingdom of Angola. This is also a considerable river, navigable quite up to the town of Icoa; that is, about thirty leagues and upwards. It gives its name to the province of Danda, and fertilizes all the countries through which it passes, without causing such vast overflows and devastations as the Zair; neither is its navigation so difficult or dangerous, unless it be on account of the numerous swarms of crocodiles, sea-horses, and monstrous serpents, which infest it, and make a dreadful havock amongst them that frequent it in canoes and other small vessels. Its course is from south-east to north-west; during which it receives the Lucale, and some other less considerable streams. The banks on each side, from the first entrance into its mouth upwards, appear to be much of the same height; yet in its course,

<sup>b</sup> Pigafet, Dapper, Davity, Cavazzi, Labat, &c.  
Le Croix, Afric, Dapper, Davity, Baudrand, Martiniere, Cavazzi,  
Labat, &c.

<sup>c</sup> Pigafet,

especially when swollen by the rains in April and May, frequently carries off some of its banks from one side to the other, or washes them into the sea. The Bengo, and Lucale, and Danda, are supposed to spring from a lake among the high mountains on the east. On the northern shore of its mouth is a fort which Mr. De Lisle calls Danda Capitantria; which serves as a guard of the frontiers between Kongo and Angola.

Other rivers between the Zair and Danda are the Lehunda, Doce, Ambroiz, Loze, Onzo, and Lutana, with a number of others of less note. The Ambriz, or Ambrisi, springs from the same lake on the eastern mountains of Tenda, and runs westward into the ocean between the mouths of the Lehunda and Loze. It runs by the town of Saint Salvador; its course is rapid, its channel deep and large, and its waters are sweet but muddy. It is only navigable by barges, by reason of the many rocks and islands that stop the mouth of it. About forty leagues up the river is a ford, where passengers are carried over on men's shoulders, on paying a certain duty to the king. The others have nothing remarkable enough to be worth farther notice.

*Others between the Zair and Danda. The Ambrisi.*

The kingdom of Kongo Proper, as well as those on the three sides of it, were divided into several petty monarchies and principalities dismembered from, and independent of, the ancient monarchs. And when the Portuguese had once made themselves masters of it, and persuaded the natives to embrace the Christian religion, they thought fit to honour those petty states with some European titles, in order to give them a kind of lustre and dignity. At first they divided the kingdom into six large provinces, to which they gave the titles of duchies, counties, and marquises, which were afterwards subdivided into lesser signories or lordships. Those provinces are situate as follows.

*The division of Kongo Proper into duchies, marquises, and counties.*

Along the sea-coasts, the county of Songo, and the great duchy of Bamba.

On the north, the duchy of Sundi and the marquise of Pango.

On the west, the duchy of Batta.

And in the inland, the marquise of Pemba.

The duchy of Bamba is situate between the rivers Ambrisi and Loze; the last of which parts it from the marquise of Pemba on the east, and the Ambrisi from the county of Songo on the north. Along the sea-coasts it extends still farther northward, to the river Lehunda; and,

*The duchy of Bamba.*



and, on the south, to that of Danda, which parts it from the kingdom of Angola. The governors of this province bear the title of dukes, and are always princes of the royal family, as despotic and arbitrary in their government as if they were really kings, notwithstanding the care and pains their monarchs have taken to keep them within due bounds. The misfortune is, that those viceroys, by engrossing all the power into their hands, are become too stubborn to be curbed, and might quickly raise themselves to an absolute independency, if the Portuguese monarchs should offer to interpose their authority; so that they are in some measure forced to suffer them to fleece and oppress their subjects, and to be contented with such tribute as they think fit, instead of what they ought to pay to the crown <sup>m</sup>.

*Salt a rich commodity.*

The duchy of Bamba is one of the largest and richest of the whole kingdom; its soil fertile, and able to produce all the necessaries of life in great plenty, were the natives industrious in cultivating it to the best advantage. The sea coasts produce likewise a prodigious quantity of salt, which is easily made, and would yield an extraordinary revenue to the crown, were the duties of it duly paid, a great deal of it being exported into foreign countries, besides what is sold upon the spot for the use of the natives; but these governors have found out means to sink the greatest part of it into their own coffers.

What would add still more to their revenue, is the fishery of the zimbis, or little sea snail, whose shell is the current coin, not only in this and the two neighbouring kingdoms, but in other distant parts of Africa; and is caught along these coasts; so that this alone would be sufficient to enrich the kingdom to a high degree, since the sea itself furnishes them with such plenty of money, without employing any other minters than fishermen. Several authors have added a third kind of treasure in this province, viz. the mines of gold, silver, quicksilver, copper, tin, and iron, which are to be found in the mountainous parts of them; but there is much reason to doubt of the reality, and much more of the pretended richness of them: one thing is certain, that the iron mines only are suffered to be made use of, and that there are very severe laws against meddling with any of the rest <sup>n</sup>.

<sup>m</sup> Pigafet, Labat, & al. ubi supra.  
<sup>n</sup> supra, cap. 2.

<sup>r</sup> Cavazzi ap. Labat, ubi

The second province of Kongo Proper, is the county, *Province of Songho.* as it is dignified, of Sogno, or Songho, which extends like the former, westwards to the Ethiopic sea, and is bounded on the north by the Zair, on the south by the Lelanda, which parts it from the duchy of Bemba above described, and on the east by the counties of Pango and Sundi. Its territory is mostly sandy and barren, but yields great quantities of salt along the sea shore; and, within land, produces great variety of palm trees, on the fruit of which, the natives chiefly subsist. The capital of this province is called Banza, or Banza Sogno, situate at about three leagues distance from cape Padrone, on the south side of the mouth of the Zair. The town is small and thinly inhabited, depending chiefly on its commerce on the Zair, by which it receives most of its provisions, and those in such small quantity, that the Europeans wonder how they can subsist with so little. It is much more surprising to see them not only chearful and contented, but singing and dancing under what seems to them a dismal scarcity, as if they enjoyed the greatest plenty.

The only particular worth notice in this town, is a church which the Capuchin friars found in it, at their first arrival, an. 1645, when the congregation de Propaganda Fide sent them thither to supply the want of regular and secular priests. Neither hath that structure any thing remarkable except its antiquity. It is supposed to have been built ever since the Portuguese visited that province, about the year 1482, and planted the Christian faith. This circumstance, if true, is the more surprising, as it is built only of timber, plaistered over on both sides with stiff clay.

This province being the very first of this kingdom which received the gospel, and the count of it the first baptized prince, whose example the king followed soon after, it is no wonder there should have been a great number of churches built by those converts, from the earliest times of their conversion, which have continued ever since; especially as we are told that the natives have preserved the Christian faith in much greater purity than is to be met with through the rest of the kingdom. Accordingly we find no less than three in this small town of Banza; the first of them stands within the cincture of the palace belonging to the counts, and is

*This province the first converted.*

• Labat ex Cavazzi, ubi supra. Vide & auct. sup. citat.

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dedicated



dedicated to the Virgin Mary; the second stands at some distance from it, and is the burying-place of those governors; the third, dedicated to St. Antony of Padua, adjoins to the monastery of the Capuchins, and serves them as a chapel, as well as a parish church. Besides these three principal churches, there are several other inferior chapels, not only in this capital, but all over the province, every sovereign, or inferior governor, being obliged to maintain one in the place where he resides.

*Duchy of Sundi.*

The third province of Kongo Proper is styled the duchy of Sundi: it is situate within land, beginning about thirteen or fourteen leagues north-east of St. Salvador, capital of the whole kingdom, and is bounded all the way north by the Zair, yet so as not to prevent the dukes of it encroaching gradually on great tracts of land on the other side of that river. However, it is bounded on the south by the duchy of Batta, and marquise of Batta; on the east and north-east, by the kingdom of Macoco, and the crystal rocks, at the foot of which the river Bancaro falls into the Zair. Its capital,

*Its capital.*

which is situated about six leagues south of the great cataract of that last river, is called Banza Sundi, to distinguish it from that of Sogno; or rather from Banza, the capital of the whole kingdom, in the province of Pemba, of which we shall speak in its proper place, and which is emphatically so called on that account; the word banza, in the Ethiopic, signifying *a court or place of residence*: but as to this of Sundi, we find nothing worth notice said of it.

*Barbarous inhabitants.*

This province, or duchy, is subdivided into several governments, the greater part of which are removed from the capital, and extend a great way into the mountains on the eastern side, which being very difficult of access, the inhabitants pay little regard to their governors, and are often insolvent, and raise commotions in the whole kingdom; for though they have, like the rest, been converted to Christianity, yet they retain so much of their old heathenish customs and superstitions, that the missionaries have not been as yet able to make them tolerable Christians, notwithstanding the indefatigable pains they have taken at the hazard, and sometimes the loss, of their lives; nor hath the civil power ever been able to civilize them, so far as to cultivate their lands, though fertile, and well watered by a great number of rivers. Their mountains are said to contain mines of the richest metals, but are not permitted to be opened, except those of iron,

*Fertile country.*

*Mines of iron.*

which

which they work into all kinds of instruments, both for agriculture and war. Only one mine of copper, of a most beautiful yellow, which is found among the mountains on the north side, and near the great cataraet of the Zair, is suffered to be wrought; and thither the inhabitants of the kingdom of Loango go to buy it in great quantities.

*Bright  
copper.*

The marquise of Pango, heretofore called Pango Logos, had then the title and prerogative of a kingdom, but hath lost both, ever since the kings of Kongo subdued and reduced it to the rank of a province. It is bounded on the north by the duchy of Sundi, and the river Vervel or Berbela; on the east, by the mountains of the sun, and the country of Dembo; on the south, by the duchy of Batta; and on the west, by the same river Vervel. Its capital is called Banza Pango, situated on the banks of the same river, near its conflux with the Coango; it hath nothing extraordinary, its territory and inhabitants, as well as those of the whole province, being much the same with those of Kongo, of which we shall speak in the proper place \*.

*Marquise  
of Pango.*

The duchy of Bata, or Batta, is situated, on the south-west of Pango; hath Dembo, Amulassa, and the salt-petre mountain on the east; on the south, the marquise of Incussa, and the burnt mountains; and Kongo and Pemba on the west. It is of a considerable extent, and was heretofore called Anguirima, or Aghirimba, and was a kingdom of itself, till both king and people submitted to the kings of Kongo; on what account our authors could not learn. Some think that of Sundi was once subject to it, and that it extended along the two sides of the Zair; and that the kingdoms of Lulca and Kongo Rhioncango, as well as the provinces of Nsonzo and Nsongo, and other territories belonging to the barbarous Giagas, on the north side of the Zair, depended on, and were tributary to it: however that be, the country is mostly fertile, and plentifully watered by variety of rivers, and produces several sorts of grain: the inhabitants are more civilized and affable than their neighbours, and were more easily converted to Christianity.

*Duchy of  
Batta.*

*Its great  
extent.*

*Tributary  
countries.*

The capital city of this duchy called Batta, is not considerable for any thing but the fertility of its territory, and its being the residence of the governors of this province.

*Capital.*

\* Pigafet. lib. ii. cap. 3. Labat ex Cavazzi, tom. i. cap. 2. & al. sup. citat.

These are allowed to have a number of arquebusiers in pay, to defend it from the incursions of the wild Giagas, or Jagas, who inhabit near its eastern frontiers, beyond the mountains of the sun and salt-petre, living chiefly by ravaging their neighbours on all sides. The road between this capital and that of the whole kingdom, now called St. Salvador, hath, we are told, a great number of houses and hamlets on both sides; a thing uncommon in these parts<sup>b</sup>.

*Marquisate  
of Pemba.*

The last province of this kingdom is styled the marquisate of Pemba, situated almost in the center of it; and, though of much smaller extent than any of the rest, hath always had this singular advantage, that its capital hath ever been the cradle, throne, and burying-place, of all the kings of Kongo, whether Gentiles or Christians, as it hath since been the residence of the viceroys, or chief governors of the marquisate. This city is seated at the foot of a mountain, called by the Portuguese the Burnt Mountain, though different and distant enough from a ridge which bears the same name, and spreads along the east side of the county of Ambula. The territory of it is well watered, as is the whole province, not only by the Lelunda, which runs quite through it, from east to west, but by the Kai Ambrisi, and some others, which equally contribute to its fertility, and the riches and happiness of its inhabitants. For the constant residence of the king and his court, which is very numerous, doth not a little excite the people to industry; whilst the great consumption of provisions, and other merchandise, improves their commerce, encourages their diligence, and increases their wealth; the fruits of which they quietly enjoy, without being exposed to the extortions of foreign viceroys, or the excursions of barbarous neighbours.

*The capital  
of the  
whole  
kingdom of  
Kongo.*

The capital of the whole kingdom, is known now by the name of Banza St. Salvador, and is by Marmol, or rather his French translator D'Ablancourt, called Amâas Kongo, if he did not really mistake the word Amâas for Banza. However that be, that of Salvador was afterwards given to it, and is the name by which it is known by the Europeans. It is situate almost in the center of the province of Pemba, upon a very high hill, mostly solid rock, about two leagues in compass, about fifty leagues east from the sea, and on the south-east side of

*Called by  
the Portu-  
guese St.  
Salvador.  
Its high  
situation.*

<sup>b</sup> Cavazzi ex vers. Labat. tom. i. ii. & al. sup. cit. De Lisle, La Croix, Dapper, Davity, & al.



the river Zair. It is beautifully shaded with variety of fruit-trees, such as the palm, lemon, orange-trees, and yields a most delightful prospect all around, whilst it commands all the country about, as far as the sight can go, without being obstructed by wood or mountain; and on the river's side the descent is very steep. The Portuguese gave it, on that account, the name of Oteiro, that is, a visting prospect, watch-tower, or singular height; and it was chiefly for this reason, that the monarchs of Kongo chose it for their residence, it being almost inaccessible to an enemy, and consequently neither easy to be surpris'd or attacked. The common highway that goes up to it is broad but winding, and the ascent of about five miles in length.

Its situation being almost in the center of the kingdom, the kings were the more ready at hand to send their orders to any part of the realm; and the top of the hill having a large plain, well watered and manured, and covered with hamlets, farms, and other houses, containing about one hundred thousand souls, and feeding a great number of cattle, the place could be easily supplied with all sorts of provisions. The mountain hath likewise some iron mines of singular use to the inhabitants, who fabricate it into weapons, and instruments of agriculture; so that it was not without great reason and forecast, that those monarchs chose this spot for their usual residence.

The town stands on an angle of the mountain, facing the south-east, enjoys a serene and healthy air; being so strongly situate by nature, it hath no walls except on the south side; and these were not built till the reign of Don Alphonso, the first Christian king of Kongo, who caused the quarter of the Portuguese to be surrounded with them, in order to secure them from insults.

He likewise caused his palace, and all the royal houses, to be walled round, leaving a wide space within, wherein to build a palace and burying-place. The top of the hill is covered with houses, which stand pretty near to each other, most of them belonging to persons of quality, who join such a number of apartments within one circumference, that they appear like little towns; those which belong to the inferior people run in strait lines, and form very handsome streets; they are mostly spacious, but their walls are all of straw, except some which the Portuguese



have caused to be built of brick, and covered with stubble or straw.

*The royal  
palacè.*

The royal palace is a spacious structure, surrounded with a four-square wall, and has the appearance of a little city; but the wall that faces the Portuguese quarter, is the only part built of stone and mortar, the other three sides being of straw, though neatly enough disposed; the walls of the inner apartments are of the same materials, but covered with hangings, or mats curiously wrought. The inner court contains gardens and orchards, adorned with alleys, arbours, and pavilions, handsome enough for the country, though neither grand nor costly. Here are ten

*Churches.*

*Jesuits  
college.*

or twelve churches, whereof the cathedral and seven others are within the town, and three within the prince's castle. The Jesuits have a college, where four of them are constantly employed in teaching the Latin and Portuguese, and in catechising the people. The town is supplied with plenty of fresh water by two fountains, one in the street called St. Jago, and the other in the palace, without being at the charge of keeping up or repairing the aqueduct. Besides these, there is, on the east side, near the foot of the hill, a spring of excellent water, which is called the Vese, and falls into the Lelunda, which serves to water the adjacent grounds. They have here but few sheep and oxen, but great plenty of goats and hogs, which they secure in the night in inclosures adjacent to their houses<sup>c</sup>; they have a large market on the piazza before the great church, which is furnished with all sorts of provisions. The rest of the square is surrounded with spacious houses, having each a large gate which opens towards it, and are mostly inhabited by noblemen, as are also many others in the suburbs of the city, and in the country round about. That part which is inclosed, and called the Portuguese city, is reckoned about a mile in circuit, and the king's palace nearly the same; the walls about each of them are very thick, but the gates of neither of them are either shut, or kept under a guard. It is not easy to ascertain the largeness of the rest of the city, the houses not adjoining so regularly on the out-skirts as in the center, but we are assured that it was very populous in Lopez's time.

*Fountains.*

The adjacent plain, as well as the vallies below it (besides the various fruit-trees lately mentioned, which yield

<sup>c</sup> Corneil. Baudrand. La Croix, Rel. Afric. tom. iii. lib. 9. Dapper, & al.

a constant verdure, as well as plenty of fruit) produce several sorts of grain, the chief of which is an exotic brought thither from the banks of the Nile, called leuco, in shape and bigness like the millet; the meal of it, when ground, makes very good bread, and is preferred by the natives to that of wheat, which last they only use at the mass. Here groweth also great quantity of maize, called by them Mazza Kongo, or *corn of Kongo*, which they use only to fatten their hogs with; their pasture-grounds likewise yield very good grass, with which they feed a greater number of cattle than in any other part of the kingdom. Thus much may suffice for the description of this metropolis.

We come now to the several other lesser provinces of Kongo Proper, which are independent of the six principal districts we have now gone through: among these the greater part are barren, and inhabited only by savages, who either lurk in their thick and impenetrable forests, or bask upon their rugged and inaccessible mountains, and both of them lead a life little different from that of brutes. The names of those provinces, for we know little else concerning them, are Zuiona, Zujamazondo, Ndamba, Nfusso, NfellaJuva, Alombo, Nfoso, Nzanga, Marsinga, and Mortonda: the three last border upon the country of Ajacoa, a nation more barbarous and inhuman than any of the rest <sup>d</sup>.

*Other provinces.*

The duchy of Ovando, situate between Kongo and Angola, and now in the possession of the Portuguese, was heretofore subject, or at least tributary, to the kings of Kongo, but the people have since withdrawn their obedience, and put themselves under the protection of the Portuguese monarchs. Its capital, called St. Michael, is situate upon the river Danda, but is a place of no great note, though the prince of this province hath some considerable feudatories, and among them the counts of Ambuila, who took formerly the title of mani, or *princes*, though then tributary to the kings of Kongo. The county of Dambi, and some other inferior provinces, followed the example of that of Ovando, and shook off the yoke of the kings of Kongo, to put themselves under the protection of the Portuguese, induced by the hopes, and perhaps the promises of being less oppressed, and of enjoying more liberty under these than they did under their own monarchs.

*Duchy of Ovando puts itself under the protection of the Portuguese.*

*Dambi and others do the same.*

<sup>d</sup> Labat ex Cavazzi.

*Other wild  
provinces  
that pay  
tribute.*

As to the rest of those more distant provinces, especially towards the east, they still acknowledge, in some measure, the authority of the kings of Kongo, but pay them no other tribute than what they are forced to by the troops, or small flying armies, which are yearly sent among them to raise it; and then, if they can but have timely notice of their coming, they immediately retire to their inaccessible mountains and forests, with their families, cattle, and effects, and return not till they are well assured those forces have taken their departure. It is even dangerous to exasperate them too far by these military executions, which are, however, very common in most parts of Africa, because they are always ready to repay themselves with advantage, by their sudden incursions into the richer provinces adjoining to them, where they commonly commit dreadful outrages, as well as load themselves with spoil, with which they quickly return to their lurking places, where they know they cannot be come at without great danger and difficulty. However, they all own so far a subjection to the king, that in time of war he may draw what succours he pleases from their respective districts, in proportion to their extent; and these readily come armed after their manner, though probably more from the prospect of plunder than any affection to him. Indeed, they are wretchedly armed, and worse clothed, having nothing but a piece of cloth or skin about the middle; and though in battle they fall on with great fury, and hideous outcries, yet, either upon the fall of their leaders in the first onset, or on a slight wound, or even a superstitious omen, betake themselves to flight, and can hardly ever be rallied again.

*Send him  
forces in  
time of  
war.*

*Living  
creatures.*

The kingdom of Kongo, like most other parts of Africa, breeds a prodigious variety of living creatures; both wild and tame, especially those of the wild kind; of which we shall have the less to say, as we have already spoken of them in some of the former volumes. Among the terrestrial, the elephant, justly esteemed the noblest, most useful, and docile, is so well known as to need no farther description than what we have given of it elsewhere; these are mostly found in the province of Bamba, which abounds with woods, pasture, and plenty of water, in which they delight much, and wash and bathe themselves in the heat of the day. They commonly go in troops of a hundred or more, old and young. Some of them are here of such a monstrous size, that the print of their hoof hath measured four, and some of them as far as seven spans

*Elephants  
of a mon-  
strous size.*



spans in diameter\*. There is commonly found in the ventricle of those that are grown old, a stone of the size of a hen's egg, which being hardened in the air or sun, is reckoned an excellent bezoar. From the hair that grows upon their tails, and that of another animal they call induvro, the women weave themselves collars, bracelets, girdles, and other ornaments, with variety of figures and devices, which denote their quality, and are in such esteem, that the hair of two elephants tails, is reckoned the price sufficient to buy a slave with : they are so valuable because the natives have not the art of taming them, but are obliged to send their bravest and stoutest men to hunt them in the woods ; an exercise attended with great labour and danger, they being here exceedingly fierce. The most common way of catching them is by digging deep holes in the ground, which they cover with branches and leaves, as is practised in most parts of Asia. Both the men and women take singular delight to attire their heads and other parts of their bodies with elephant's hair, which they weave in a very agreeable manner.

*Ornaments made of their tails.*

*Not tamed by the natives.*

*How hunted and caught.*

We do not find that this kingdom breeds any rhinoceroses ; but by the quantities of their horns which are brought thither, and the variety of uses made of them, both in physic and otherwise, we are inclined to suppose that they have them from the Nazichi, or some other neighbouring countries. Lions, leopards, tygers, wolves, and other voracious animals, are here in great plenty, and do much damage ; also monkies of a vast variety of sizes and shapes. The zerba, or as the Portuguese call it, the zabra, another wild animal, well known for its surprising swiftness, and the extreme beauty and regularity of its streaked skin, is likewise found here, and hunted by the natives, who esteem its flesh a very dainty food, and its hide a valuable commodity to send into Europe.

*Rhinoceros not found in Kongo.*

*Lions of a monstrous size.*

They have here likewise a great abundance of buffalos and wild asses. The dante seems peculiar to this country ; it is shaped and coloured much like an ox, though not so large ; its horns are like those of a he-goat, but very smooth and shining, and of a blackish hue, of which the natives make great variety of pretty baubles. The skin of this creature is commonly bought by the Portuguese, and sent into Germany, to be tanned and made into targets, which are then called dantes. The natives make use of the raw hide dried, to make their shields, which are so

*The zabra. Buffalos and wild asses. The dante.*

*The use of its hide.*

\* Pigafet. Davity, Dapper, Cavazzi, Labat, & al. supra. citat. tough,



tough, that no arrow or dart can go through them, and large enough to cover the whole body. This creature, which they call impangazza, hath two horns growing out of the forehead, and in other respects is not unlike the buffalo. It is vastly swift of foot, and, when wounded, will follow the scent or smoke of the gunpowder with such fury, that the hunter hath no other way to avoid it, but by climbing, with all possible speed, up to a tall tree, by the help of a rope-ladder which he always carries with him upon such occasions, and takes care to fasten to some branch before they venture to fire. The wounded creature, finding its enemy out of its reach, stays at the foot of the tree for him, and stirs not from it till a second, or perhaps a third shot hath laid it dead under him. Their flesh is very good to eat; upon which account not only the natives, but the lions, tygers, and other beasts of prey, wage continual war with them; but nature hath given them such an instinct to guard against the latter, that they commonly go in large droves of seldom less than a hundred; which, when attacked by them, dispose themselves into a ring, with their horns outward, with which they defend themselves with surprising agility and strength. They are here of different colours like our cows, some brown, some grey, and others black. Their marrow is reckoned a warm restorer of paralytic and decayed limbs, and their flesh a wholesome and dainty dish<sup>b</sup>. Elks, though commonly supposed to live only in the colder climes, are here in great numbers. The natives call them neocco, and hunt them for their flesh, horns, and hides, but much more for their hoofs, which, when the creature is killed in a proper attitude, and at a proper season, they reckon an effectual remedy against the epilepsy and apoplexy, being worn next the skin. They make their hides into short boots, to defend their legs and feet from thorns, when they are obliged to go through their thick forests, where the paths are commonly very narrow and difficult.

*The way of hunting it.*

*Its flesh excellent.*

*Their marrow a medicine.*

*The impalanca.*

The impalanca is of the shape and size of a mule, and its hide is spotted with divers colours; it hath two horns growing upright upon its head, twisted about from the root, according to the number of its years, and tapering upwards to a sharp point. The flesh of it is white, fat, and tender, and fit to eat at all seasons, except in their rutting time; but it is chiefly valuable for the stone which

<sup>b</sup> Davity, Dapper, Pigafet. Cavazzi, Labat, & al. ubi supra.

is taken out of its ventricle, which is reckoned an excellent antidote against all poisons, if extracted soon after the beast is killed, and dried either in the air or sun. Stags and others of the deer kind, as well as wild goats, are here very numerous; the former are called by the general name of golungos, and the latter by that of viadi, or bambi. Neither of these two kinds have any horns, except by chance, and then scarcely two inches long. It is in the ventricle of these, when they come to be old, that the genuine bezoar is found. Their flesh is delicious, except in rutting time; but many of the superstitious heathens abstain from it, from a notion that it infects those that eat it with the leprosy.

*Bezoar  
taken out of  
its ventri-  
cle.*

The nsoffi is of the bigness of a cat, of an ash-colour, and hath two small horns on its head. It is, perhaps, the most fearful creature that lives, ever in motion, and starting or running at the least noise or breath of air; even when it is drinking, it swallows one single gulp, and runs away, as if pursued, and returns with the like fear, till it hath satiated its thirst; it doth the same when browsing on the grass, at every blade it takes in its mouth. Its flesh has an exquisite taste, and the natives prefer its skin to that of any other creature to make strings for their bows.

*The nsoffi,  
a fearful  
creature;*

*Use of its  
skin.*

The nsima, or civet cat, is the true creature from which that odoriferous drug is taken, and, when genuine, valued at the rate of gold-dust: the hunting of it is dangerous, by reason of its strength and nimbleness, and its dreadful biting when it is caught. The sura is a kind of land rat, which burrows under-ground, like moles. The flesh is so exquisite, that a feast among the grandees would be looked upon as defective without it. Yet there are some sects among the Gentile natives, who, like the Jews, look upon the eating of this creature, and some others of the same kind, as unlawful.

*Nsima, or  
civet cat.*

Camelions swarm in this country: we need not give our readers a description of them, as they are so well known; but shall only observe, that they are so far from living on the air, or on small flies only, that, upon the opening of some of them, their stomachs have been found to contain a variety of other food, such as the flower of the manioc root, and the seeds of sundry fruits and herbs. They have several sorts of wild cats, as the gingi, nsoffi, and maimoni, whose furs excel those of the finest tygers, in the beauty, variety, and regularity, of their streaks and spots. The forests also swarm with wild dogs,

*The came-  
leon.*

which

which, like the wolves, prey upon the tame cattle, and are so fierce, that they will fly upon armed men, and attack whole droves of cows, goats, or sheep. Their teeth are exceeding keen and sharp; they never bark, but make a dreadful howling when hungry, or in pursuit of their prey. We could name a great variety of other animals, both small and great, so different in their shapes and sizes, that the natives themselves know not under what class to rank them, nature seeming to sport itself in these hot climates, with a strange variety of productions (D).

*Tame animals neglected.*

As to their oxen, sheep, hogs, horses, mules, and asses, though they might easily make them useful and profitable, as they have them here in great numbers, yet such is their pride and indolence, that they rather chuse to let them run wild, and be devoured by the wild beasts, than to reap any benefit from them, either by breeding, or breaking them for riding, agriculture, or any other uses. They dare not even mount a horse that hath been broke by the Portuguese; and these make but little use of them in their journeys, because they can be more commodiously carried in their palanquins, or hammocks, by their slaves, who are in a great measure the only beasts of burden and labour. However, where they have been more conversant with the Portuguese, they have learned to inclose cows, sheep, and goats, especially the grandees, and those of the richer sort. But the chief benefit they reap from them is their milk, of which they are very fond, and drink it by itself, but have not yet learned to make butter or cheese.

*Some keep them for their milk.*

*Land and sea fowls.*

It would afford matter sufficient for a long chapter or two, to speak of the vast variety of fowl, both of land and sea, which this kingdom affords. Among the former, their ostriches are of surprising magnitude and beauty, and in great plenty. Their feathers, mixed with

(D) We cannot pass by a singular quadrupede, which never sets its feet upon the ground but it dies soon after: keeps itself constantly upon the trees. It is called entengiã, and is very small, and its skin so beautifully spotted, that none but the kings of Kongo, the princes of the blood, and such nobles as obtain the privilege from him, have the liberty of wearing it. And even the kings of Lovango, Caçongo, and Gey, receive that extraordinary fur as a considerable present, and a particular favour (4).

(4) Dapper, *Afric.* & al.

those



those of the peacocks, which are here no less numerous and beautiful, are used instead of ensigns and standards, and made into umbrellas. The king of Angola keeps vast numbers of the latter in a wood, surrounded with high walls, and suffers none in this dominions to breed or have any of them, because he uses their feathers in his royal ensigns<sup>1</sup>.

Turkies, geese, hens, and ducks, both wild and tame, are here also in vast plenty; and pheasants are so numerous and familiar, that the boys take them alive in their gins. There is likewise a prodigious number of pigeons, doves, wood-cocks, and other smaller birds, which are common in all these countries, and need no farther description. The songo, or vuichi, so called from the noise it makes when it hath discovered some wild honey, to allure travellers to come and share it with him, has been spoken of in our account of Abyssinia, and they are both here and there so cherished by the people, that it would be dangerous for any stranger to do them any hurt.

The next kind of birds in favour among the natives, *Variety of parrots.* is the parrot, of which they have the greatest variety, both for size and colour; particularly a small sort, not much bigger than a sparrow, but of an elegant shape, and the most delightful colours. But the most esteemed of all, are those which they style, by way of excellence, the birds of music. They are somewhat bigger than Canary birds, their bills red, their feathers of the same colour; some of them however, are green or mixed, and only their bills and feet black; others are grey, others dun, and some all white, or all black; which last sort is the most admired for the sweetness of its note, but much more so for some articulate sounds they give, which would incline one to believe, that they speak as well as sing. This last kind is so much esteemed through the whole kingdom, that persons of rank have, from time immemorial, taken singular delight in keeping them in cages and aviaries, for the sake of their surprising melody.

On the other hand, as the Kongoese are superstitious to the last degree, there are several kinds of birds which they look upon as ominous, and are so terrified at the sight, or hearing of them, that if they are going upon ever so momentous an expedition, if they are met in

<sup>1</sup> Lopez ap. Pigaf. lib. i. cap. 9.



*The great owl called by the devil's name.*

*Birds of prey.*

council, or about to engage an enemy with ever so great an advantage, the flight or cry of such birds will throw them into a general panic, and disperse them in the utmost haste and confusion. The most dreaded of the ominous kind, are crows, ravens, bats, owls, and especially the great owl, which they call, in their tongue, kariam pemba, which is the name they give to the devil.

Birds of prey, such as eagles, vultures, falcons of sundry sorts, sparrow-hawks, and others of the like nature, are here likewise in great quantities, though never bred, or used by the natives, for the game. Herons, bitterns, and some others of the like voracious kind, commonly abound in their marshes, lakes, and other waters. Among these, they have a noble bird, in shape and size like a crane, with a red bill and feet, and feathers of a most beautiful red and white, intermixed with grey, brown, and other shades; that which the Portuguese call the pelican, is of a large size and whitish colour. It will swim a good while under water, and hath such a wide throat, that it will swallow a whole fish at once. Its stomach is reckoned so very hot, and so strong of digestion, that the natives wear the skins of it upon their breasts, when their appetites fail them, in hopes to reap the same benefit from this application. But the most surprising, is that which they call the fisher, which flies up, and keeps himself still, at a great height in the air, with his head bent downwards, whence he discerns the fish that swim below, whether in the sea, or in rivers. When he perceives his prey under him, he plunges down with great rapidity, and never misses carrying it off, unless, some stronger bird of the same kind, snatch it out of his jaws. This creature is most fond of that fish which swims in shallow and sandy waters, in rapid rivers and cataracts, and runs the risk of dashing itself into pieces against rocks, or the hard bottom, by the vehemence of its fall.

*The fisher, whence so called.*

*Plenty of fish.*

*The pico, a strong and dangerous fish.*

The fish kind is in this part likewise, as in other maritime countries, in great plenty and variety, both from the sea, and from the multitude of rivers, which we have described; we shall content ourselves with mentioning only some few of the most curious, without entering into a particular detail of the rest. The pico marina, so called from the resemblance of its mouth to the beak of a wood-pecker, is a sea-fish of a large size and prodigious strength. It hath four fins on its back, three under its belly,

belly, and one on each side of its head ; its tail is large and forked, by which it cuts the waves with surprising force and velocity. It is at war with every fish that swims, and with every thing it meets in its way, without being intimidated by the largest vessels ; a surprising instance of which intrepidity, we are told by some missionaries, whose ship was attacked by one of them, near these coasts, in the dead of night : the violence of the shock which it gave to the vessel quickly awakened the captain and the rest of the people, who immediately ran to the ship's side, where they perceived, by moon light, this huge monster, fastened by its forehead to the vessel, and making the strongest efforts to disengage itself ; upon which some of them tried to pierce him with their pikes, but he got off before they could accomplish their aim. On the next morning, upon visiting that side of the vessel, they found, about a foot below the surface of the water, a piece of its bony snout stuck fast into the wood, and two or three inches of it projecting outwards. They went presently after to visit the inside of the ship, and discovered about five or six inches more of the point of the horn which had penetrated through the plank<sup>k</sup>.

The corvo marino, or sea raven, is about six feet long, *The sea-raven.* and big in proportion ; but the most singular circumstance appertaining to this creature, is the stone found in its head, to which the natives ascribe some medicinal virtues, and the delicate taste of its hard roe, which is still more admired when dried in the sun, and becomes as hard as a stone. The requino of America, or, as the Italians and Spaniards call it, tuberone, or tiburone, and pesce cana, or shark, is too well known to want a description. The cholone is another sea-fish, of which vast quantities are caught at the mouths of the river Coanza, and on the coasts of the province of Loanda ; the Portuguese are no less fond of catching it than the natives, on account of an oil drawn from it, which they esteem an excellent remedy against wounds and burns. This oil is drawn first by exposing the fish in the sun, till it hath done dropping, and afterwards by laying it over the fire, which forces out the rest of it ; both are reckoned very good, but the former is most esteemed. The last we shall mention of the sea kind, is that which they call the sea-elephant, not for its size, it being scarce above eight or nine inches long, but because it hath a proboscis.

<sup>k</sup> Labat ex Cavaz. ubi supra, p. 190, & seq.

This,

*The pesce  
donna, or  
woman-  
fish, de-  
scribed.*

This, and that called by the Portuguese squilone, are about the same bigness; but the latter is a fresh-water fish, in great request for its exquisite taste and fatness, so that it is mostly eat without any sauce; it is likewise remarkable for a soft kind of down that grows about its mouth. But the most wonderful of all the fresh water kind, is that which the natives call ngullu-a-maza, and the Europeans, improperly enough, pesce donna, or woman-fish: the head of it is almost flat like that of a frog, and its mouth to the full as wide, shewing two rows of teeth, white and small, like those of a dog. The eyes are round, large, and protuberant, the nose flat, the nostrils large and wide, the forehead small, the ears long and large, like those of a cropt mastiff; the hair long and harsh, hanging a good way down its back, the neck thick and short, its shoulders very broad; the breast or duggs full and plump, the flesh from thence downwards below the navel hairy or rather bristly; the sex well distinguished; the arms of great length and very sinewy, with five fingers to each hand, and three joints to each finger; each finger being joined to the other by a thin membrane, like the feet of a duck. From the lower belly downwards, it is one continued fish, covered with large scales, and ending in a forked tail; it is covered behind with a thick and loose skin, reaching from the neck down two-thirds of its body, with which it can cover itself around, and carry its young ones under it. From all which circumstances our author conjectures the male to be the triton, and the female the naiad, mentioned by the ancients.

*Where  
mostly  
caught.*

This surprising creature is caught in the rivers and ponds of this kingdom, especially in the lakes, where they shelter themselves under the reeds and weeds that grow in and about them; and as the males and females are seldom parted from each other, the natives kill them both without mercy, notwithstanding their loud and dismal cries. Their flesh is well tasted, and much admired by the Africans, whose stomachs can digest any thing; but unwholesome, and sometimes very pernicious, to the Europeans. These nevertheless catch them, when they find them in any of their rivers, by making large holes along the banks, filled with water, into which they throw some dead fish, which ngullu-a-maza goes to devour, and, being exceedingly greedy and sluggish, becomes an easy prey. The natives ascribe some extraordinary virtues to the small ribs, and the two little bones that



that grow behind the ears of this creature, neither worthy of our credit or notice. Their fresh-water fish might be in much greater plenty, were not their lakes and rivers so prodigiously infested with swarms of sea-horses, and crocodiles of a monstrous size and length, which make the most terrible devastation. The natives set a value upon some stones of the bezoartic kind, which are found in the paunches of these amphibious animals, and esteem them excellent antidotes against poisons. They likewise find between their breasts and shoulders, some kind of tumours or swellings like boils, the bag of which contains within it a brownish liquid substance, which being inspissated by the sun, exceeds the finest musk in the world, but is apt by time, or by being too much exposed to the air, to evaporate, and lose its odoriferous scent. Their eggs, likewise, which they lay by hundreds upon the banks of rivers, and cover with sand, to be hatched by the sun, are reckoned such excellent food, that the natives are very fond of gathering them, though they run no small hazard in doing it, as well to feed upon them, as to prevent their multiplying too fast; though, with all their diligence, they cannot prevent their rivers and lakes from swarming with them.

*The bezo-  
ar stones  
found in  
the former.*

They are likewise infested with a vast variety of serpents, some of them of a monstrous length and thickness; rattle-snakes, vipers, and other venomous reptiles, whose bite is immediate death, if some powerful antidote be not speedily applied. Some of them poison by their breath, which they retain some time in their lungs or mouth, and then blow upon the object with such force, that it suffocates it, whether man or beast; others emit a kind of corroding juice out of their mouths, which will deprive a person of his sight, unless a proper remedy be quickly applied; and even then the eyes will be greatly impaired by it, and remain in a constant convulsive motion. The bama is of the amphibious kind, ever at war with the crocodile; but is not reckoned venomous, and their flesh is esteemed exquisite meat. There are others small and thick, called nhambi, of which the natives are much afraid, because, being of the colour of the bark of a tree, and keeping themselves rivined about it, they are not easily perceived, and their bite is of the most deadly kind. The leuta's skin is sleek and smooth, and beautifully variegated; but its venom is such, that the very touch of the creature is affirmed to throw a person into violent convulsions: the natives

*Vast and  
dreadful  
serpents.*



make use of its gall as an efficacious antidote, not only against its venom, but likewise against that of any other creature. There is still another sort more beautifully spotted, with red, white, and black, the colours bright and lively, but the red predominant, which makes the creature look like a piece of fine spotted coral; upon which account, the Europeans, both here, and at Fernambuca in America, call it *biscia di corallo*; but its venom is not the less dangerous, notwithstanding its beauty<sup>1</sup>.

*Scorpions,  
and other  
venomous  
insects.*

Scorpions and other venomous insects, both flying and reptile, are here likewise in great variety. The most pernicious and dangerous kind is the ant or pismire, of which they reckon no less than six different species of different colours and sizes, and all of them formidable, both on account of their prodigious number, and the mischiefs they do, not only to the fruits of the earth, but even to men and beasts, whom they will surround in the night in such swarms, that they will eat them to the very bone. Some of them infest the houses in such numbers, as to undermine the very foundations, and plague all kinds of inmates, almost, and sometimes quite, to death. Others lay so thick upon the paths and highways, that one cannot move a step without treading upon them, and having one's legs and thighs almost devoured by them. A third sort of a white and red colour, though very small, will gnaw their way through the hardest wood, penetrate into a strong chest, and in a little while devour all the cloaths, linen, and every thing that is in it, except metals and stones. A fourth sort, small and black, leave a most intolerable stench upon every thing they touch, whether cloaths or household stuff, which are not easily sweetened again. A fifth sort harbours chiefly upon the leaves and branches of trees; and if a man chance to climb up to save himself from a wild beast, he is so tormented by them, that nothing but the dread of the jaws of the one could make him undergo the stings of the other. The sixth and last sort is of the flying kind, which live wholly under-ground, till age furnishes them with wings to fly; and then they rise in such swarms as darken the air, in the same manner as the locusts, of which we have spoken among the destructive insects of Abyssinia. Amidst a great variety of these pernicious flying

*The flying  
ant and  
locust killed  
and eaten.*

<sup>1</sup> Pigafet. Davity, Dapper, Labat ex Cavaz. ubi supra, p. 193. & seq.

insects,

insects, they have one species of a more friendly and profitable kind, viz. the industrious bee, which furnishes the inhabitants with excellent honey and wax, in such prodigious plenty, that there is scarcely a hollow tree, cliff of a rock, or cleft of the earth, in which they do not find great quantities of their combs<sup>z</sup>.

## S E C T. II.

*Of the Number, Genius, Customs, Religion, Superstition, Language, and Traffic of the Natives of Kongo Proper; Fossils, Minerals, Metals, and other natural and artificial Rarities of that Kingdom.*

WE have already given so ample and clear an account of the origin, antiquity, government, colour, and other particulars relating to the ancient Ethiopians, from whom the natives of this kingdom are descended, that it were needless to repeat here what hath been so fully discussed in our ancient history. We shall therefore confine ourselves to what more properly regards the history of the modern inhabitants, from the time of their country's being first visited by the Portuguese missionaries, An. Dom. 1482, seeing all that hath preceded it up to the conquest of the Homerites, is wrapt in impenetrable darkness.

1. Some authors, writing rather from mere conjecture, or precarious inference, have represented this kingdom as thinly peopled; their metropolis, as scarcely containing five thousand souls; their other most populous towns as coming vastly short of that number; the greater part of them as containing about fifty or sixty families; and the rest of them as still proportionally thinner<sup>a</sup>: whereas nothing is more plainly, or more unanimously, contradicted by these who have been in those parts, and have had all the proper opportunities of being better informed. The Portuguese found the country for the most part covered with towns and villages, and those swarming with inhabitants; the cities well filled with people, particularly the metropolis, which contained above fifty thousand souls. The provinces, though not equally populous, yet in the whole make up such an amount, as plainly proves that what is wanting in the one, is amply made up by

*The populousness of the kingdom of Kongo. Their vast armies.*

<sup>z</sup> Labat, & al. sup. citat.

<sup>a</sup> Vide Pigafet. Linschot. Davity, Dapper, Cavazzi ap. Labat tom. i. cap 2. Corneille, Baudrant, Mariniere sub Kongo.

another. Thus we are told, that the duchy of Bemba is still able to raise two hundred thousand fighting men, and was once in a condition to furnish double that number; and that the army of the king of Kongo, in the year 1665, consisted of no less than nine hundred thousand fighting men, besides an infinite multitude of women, children, and slaves, and all raised out of his dominions above described. The number of converts to Christianity, which a small number of Capuchin friars made among the more civilized sort, within the space of a few years, is affirmed to have amounted to six hundred thousand. The more barbarous sort are no less numerous, though confined to their thick forests, or rocky mountains; we therefore have so little reason to imagine this great kingdom depopulated by the wars, diseases, and inundations that frequently rage among them, or from the vast numbers of wild and venomous creatures that swarm in most parts of it, that we shall be rather apt to conclude it impossible for such a prodigious number and constant increase of natives to subsist, especially considering their strange neglect of cultivating their lands, without being forced to devour one another, unless they were frequently thinned by such destructive calamities and disasters<sup>b</sup>. The surprising fecundity of their women, the hardness with which they bring up their children, and the stoutness and healthiness of their men, if the missionaries may be credited, is such, that their villages and hamlets so swarm with men, women, and children, that a father will exchange one or two of the latter for some commodity he wants, or even for some trifling bawble he fancies; insomuch that the number of slaves they sell abroad, doth seldom, communibus annis, fall short of fifteen or sixteen thousand.

*The prodigious fecundity of their women, and number of children.*

*The genius of the Kongoese.*

Considering all the disadvantages and calamities, poverty, slavery, and supineness, which this kingdom constantly labours under, one would be apt to think it impossible for its wretched inhabitants to entertain any very favourable conceit, either of themselves, or of their country; nevertheless if the unanimous consent of all that have been most conversant among them may be credited, there is scarce a nation under heaven that entertains a more exalted idea of both, than this of the Kongoese, or is more hardened against all conviction to the contrary, from reason, experience, or the most impartial comparison with other countries in Europe or Asia. It is one of the funda-

*High conceit of themselves and their country,*

<sup>b</sup> Cavaz. ubi supra, & al. supra citat.



mentals of their belief, that the rest of the world was the work of angels, but that their kingdom of Kongo, in its full and ancient extent, was performed by the Supreme Architect, and must of course enjoy vast advantages and prerogatives above all others; their monarchs must be the most opulent, wise, and powerful, and their subjects the noblest, richest, most ingenious, and happiest in the universe. Tell them of the magnificence of some of the European or Asiatic courts, their immense revenues, the grandeur of their palaces and edifices, the riches and happiness of their subjects, the vast progress they have made in the arts and sciences, commerce, manufactures, and other advantages, to which their country is wholly a stranger, they will coolly answer, That all this must come vastly short of the dignity and splendor of the kings and kingdom of Kongo, and that there can be but one Kongo in the world, to the happiness of whose monarch and people all the rest were created to contribute, and to whose treasury the sea and river pay their constant tribute of zimbis, whilst other princes must condescend to enrich themselves, by digging through rocks and mountains, to come at the excrements of the earth; for so they style gold and silver, which are in such value among other nations<sup>c</sup>.

*and of their  
monarchs.*

They imagine, that the nations that come to traffic among them are forced to that servile employment by their poverty and the badness of their country, rather than induced to it by their luxury or avarice; whilst they themselves, with the utmost ease and content, can indulge their natural indolence and sloth, though attended with the most pinching hunger and misery, rather than disgrace the dignity of their blood by any kind of industry; which, how laudable and beneficial soever, is looked upon by them only as a lesser degree of slavery. Hence it is that they are neither ashamed or afraid of their extreme indigence or poverty, though it obliges them to go almost naked, without covering on their heads, or shoes to their feet; exposed to the scorching beams of a vertical sun from above, and the burning sand and stones from beneath. With the same ease and content they can take their repose on the bare ground, either in their wretched huts, which are exposed to all winds and weathers, or, if need require it, in the open air, without any inconvenience; or, if they contract any distemper by it, without any other help

*Mean opi-  
nion of  
those who  
traffic with  
them.*

<sup>c</sup> Pigafet. lib. i. cap. 7. Cavaz. ap. Labat. tom. i. cap. 13. p. 216, & seq.



*Poor way of living.* or remedy than patience and natural strength. Hence it is that they chuse to support nature with such a small quantity of grain or pulse as their wives can sow and reap; or, when that fails, with some fruits, roots, and other spontaneous vegetables, rather than debase their nobility by joining their hands to the plough or spade. On the same account they neglect the breeding of cattle of any kind, how profitable soever they might prove to them, and allege, that it is too much below their dignity to take the care of beasts upon them<sup>d</sup>.

*The burghers now apply to sometrades,*

It must be owned, however, that since the settlement of the Portuguese, their example hath roused many of them out of their fantastic pride and shameful sloth, into some kind of laudable industry. The munesi konghly, or *burghers*, for instance, who had till then an irreconcilable aversion to all sorts of labour, and used to spend their whole time in singing, smoaking, dancing, and other idle diversions, have been since excited to apply their thoughts to some useful labours; such as weaving of nets, and other coarse stuffs, sawing of boards, several branches of carpentry, and other trades.

*as do the mobati, or peasants.*

In like manner the mobati, or those who live in villages or hamlets, have also learned to grub and cultivate the lands, to plough and sow, and to weave coarse stuffs for their own use. But even these usually commit the most laborious part to their wives and slaves, without the least ambition of excelling one another in any branch under their care; and this not for want of natural capacity, for both those burghers and peasants who are more conversant with the Portuguese, have since discovered a very lucky genius and readiness to imitate them in several curious works; from which circumstance it is supposed the credit and profit they gain by it will spur them on still to farther improvements.

*Kongoese the most sturdy beggars.*

But though it be generally esteemed so much beneath their dignity to apply to any useful work, yet they think it no disgrace to beg and steal. They are affirmed to be the most shameless and importunate beggars in the world; they will take no denial, spare no crouching, lying, prayers, or encomiums to obtain charity, nor curses and ill language when sent away without it. They deem no theft unlawful or scandalous, except it be committed in a private manner, without the knowlege of the person wronged. In all other cases, it is esteemed a piece of bravery and

*Public thieving no scandal or crime.*

<sup>d</sup> Labat, & al. *ibid*.

gallantry to wrench any thing from a person by violence; and this kind of theft is so common, not only among the vulgar, but among their great ones, that they make no scruple, in their travels from place to place, to seize not only upon all the provisions they meet with, in towns and villages, but likewise upon any-thing else that falls in their way; a practice which obliges those poor people, who are accustomed to such violences, to conceal the few valuables they have in some secret places out of their knowledge and reach.

The complexion of the genuine natives, both men and women, is black, though not to the same degree, some being of a deeper dye than others, as in most countries under this zone. Since their inter-marriages with the Portuguese, they have varied from their native hue; some to a dark brown, some to an olive, and others to a blackish red, especially the younger sort. Their hair is black and curled, and some have it also of a dark sandy; their eyes are mostly of a fine lively black, but some of a dark sea-colour; they have neither flat noses nor thick lips, like the Nubians and other Negroes; their stature is mostly of the middle size; and, excepting their black complexion, they much resemble the Portuguese, though some of them are more fat and fleshy. *Their complexion, shape, &c.*

In point of disposition they are for the most part mistrustful, jealous, envious, and treacherous; and where they once take a distaste or affront, will spare no pains, nor stick at any base means to be avenged of, and crush their enemy under their feet. Nor need it seem strange, when we consider that they are brought up without any ties of natural affection. A father will sell a son or daughter, or perhaps both, for a piece of cloth, a collar or girdle of coral or beads, and often for a bottle of wine or brandy. A husband may have as many wives, or if a Christian, as many concubines, as he pleases, and repudiate, or even sell them, though with child, at his pleasure. The concubines may get themselves divorced by their unfaithfulness; and, if but tolerably handsome, will not fail of meeting with men that will take them upon those terms. The very wives, though it be a capital crime for them to break the conjugal faith, have a way to rid themselves of their husbands, if they are dissatisfied with them, or have set their affections upon some new gallant, by falsely accusing themselves and them of an atrocious crime, as it is deemed among them, of which we shall have occasion to speak in the sequel. Upon such accusation, *Jealous envious tempers. Parents sell their children for trifles. Husbands their wives. How wives get rid of them.*

tion, the husband is sure to be put to death, whilst the wife is left at liberty to be married to another<sup>c</sup>. Where therefore the relation between men and their wives and concubines, is exposed to such uncertain fluctuations, it is not to be expected there should be any natural affection between them, much less any tenderness or proper care for their mutual offspring, while these last can see themselves bought and sold by their parents without the least concern, well knowing that it will be the interest of their new master to feed and nourish them, perhaps better than they were at home, where the whole management of a family is committed by the indolent husband to the wife, who, though perhaps proud, ill-natured, wanton, or indiscreet, keeps the rest of the wives, concubines, and their children, under absolute subjection.

*Their religion down-right idolatry.*

The religion of this country, before the Portuguese introduced the gospel into it, was, and is still, among the unconverted, a monstrous compound of idolatry and superstition, and of the most absurd and detestable rites and customs, invented and calculated by a set of gangas (so they style their priests) merely to keep the people under the most cruel tyranny, subjection, and misery. We observed, indeed, at the beginning of this section, that they acknowledged a supreme Being, whom they call in their language Nzambiam-pongu, and believe to be all-powerful, to whom they ascribe the creation of their country; but this belief did not hinder them from affirming, that he had committed all sublunary things to the care and government of a great multitude and variety of subordinate or inferior deities, appointed to preside over the air, sea and earth, lakes and rivers, winds, storms, rains, lightnings, and drought, heat and cold, men and beasts, fowls and fishes, trees, fruits, and other products, fertile and barren, healthy and sickly seasons, and, in a word, over all the blessings and curses to which this world and all its inhabitants are subjected. Hence proceeds that immense multitude of false deities, idols, and altars, and that prodigious variety of gangas or priests, and superstitious rites, still found in those parts of the kingdom, which have not yet received the gospel<sup>d</sup>.

*Plurality of inferior deities and priests.*

*Various superstitions in the eastern parts.*

But though the ignorant people were taught by their knavish priests to acknowledge such a variety of inferior deities, they were left wholly at liberty to make which of

<sup>c</sup> Cavazzi ap. Labat. ubi supra, tom. i. cap. 15. p. 160. Pigafet. & al. <sup>d</sup> Pigafet. & al. supra citat.



them they thought fit the object of their worship and confidence, and to represent them in what shape they pleased, whether of living creatures, as serpents, crocodiles, lions, tigers, he-goats, &c. or of trees and plants of different kinds; or, lastly, of statues or images, unskilfully carved or painted, some of which they worshipped in their houses, and others in sorry temples. Their worship consisted indifferently in genuflexions, prostrations, fumigations, and other such superstitious rites; but what was most insisted on by the gangas, and without which all the rest was unavailable, was the offering to them some of their most valuable effects, whether for food, apparel, or other useful purposes; in this particular consisted the principal income of the gangas, who sell them the favour of those deities at the most exorbitant price.

*Representations of their gods.*

*Way of worshipping them.*

These gangas spare no stratagem or knavery, wherever idolatry still reigns, to harden their votaries in it, and deter them from embracing Christianity, under pretence that all the calamities that happen, either public or private, are the unavoidable effects of the anger and resentment of their gods, not only against the apostates from their worship, but against their votaries, for suffering strangers to come in among, and debauch their fellow-subjects from the true religion.

*Their gangas, or priests.*

As these religious jugglers are very numerous towards the eastern parts of the kingdom, so they are divided into as many sects as they form communities, every one of which have their peculiar gods and manner of worship; and every ganga hath his particular office.

Some of these gangas undertake to procure blessings, others to avert judgments, to cure diseases, to undo witchcrafts and enchantments; others are consulted about making war, the success of excursions, proper times for sowing and reaping, repaying their deities with proper rites and sacrifices for blessings received; and appeasing their anger when chastised by them: in all which cases, the consultants must never come empty-handed, or refuse to pay a price equivalent to the blessing desired. They are generally so scrupulous and fearful in this respect, that they will not venture to build a house or hut without consulting some ganga, and putting the fabric under the protection of a deity; neither dares the owner enter into the possession of it, without having previously employed the ganga to make the proper sacrifices, fumigations, and other ceremonies, in order to secure that protection. The same caution is observed in almost every thing else; and

*Superstition of the people.*

even



even the Giagas, the most barbarous people of this kingdom, never venture to begin their harvest, till they have previously offered various, and even human victims to their gods, and gorged their gangas themselves with human flesh †.

*New moon,  
and other  
festivals.*

Excepting their new moons, they have no set festivals or times of worship, but such as the ganga iliqui, or president, appoints either ad libitum, or as occasion is supposed to require them; as after a victory, a good harvest, or any other public blessing. It is he, who hath the privilege to appoint the sacrifices, and other rites proper to the solemnity, to receive the appointed offerings from the people, and to offer them upon the altars of their deities: he likewise prescribes the other ceremonies, rejoicings, music, feasting, and dancing, which are to crown the solemnity.

*The chal-  
lombe's high  
dignity.*

But the highest power and dignity of the whole priestly tribe, is he they style shalome, or chalombe, whom the people look upon as a kind of deity. It is to him they offer the first of their whole product, with the most scrupulous exactness; they are mostly brought to him by the master of the family and his principal wife, with songs and music suitable to the occasion: if he is satisfied with them, he bids them go and live merrily, and expect an hundred fold against the next harvest; if not, he sends them away with tokens of dislike. When sowing time revolves, they bring him a fresh present; in return for which, he sends some servant of his to go and strike the first stroke of the spade or mattock into the ground, which they esteem as a great blessing upon their future harvest. If it answers their hopes, they never fail to interpret it as the effect of his powerful intercession with their gods; but if the contrary, they are infatuated enough to attribute it to some default of their own.

*No person  
comes near  
their  
houses.*

No person of any rank is allowed to enter, or even approach the house of the chalombe, under the severest penalties, unless it be by his permission, or on some urgent occasion; because it is there that he pretends to keep the sacred fire, which he distributes amongst them at a very high rate. Here likewise he keeps his sovereign tribunal, not only for religious, but likewise for civil matters, for the dispatch of which he appoints a certain number of substitutes or delegates, over whom he presides in chief. This presidency gives him such an uncontrollable autho-

† *Iid. ibid. Davity, Dapper, & al.*

rity and sway, that if a person be sent souza, or governor, over them, they dare not acknowledge or obey him, unless he be previously approved of by him. Those governors, therefore, are obliged to pay a singular regard to him, and to buy his friendship and protection at an extravagant price. They must likewise be very cautious not to do any thing of a public or even military nature without his approbation, or hope to attain that by any means but by dint of presents : but when once a right understanding is fixed between them, they become such an effectual support to each other, that they fleece and tyrannize each in his particular province, without any opposition or danger ; by which means the civil officer seldom fails of repaying himself, with interest, the prodigious extortions which he is obliged to pay to the chalombe \*.

Such is the deep regard which the people pay to this chief priest, that they think it a capital and unpardonable crime to have any conjugal commerce with their wives or concubines all the time that he is absent from his usual residence, either upon public or private affairs ; of which he always takes care to give them previous notice, as well as of his return. The natives, though otherwise very libidinous, are exceeding careful to abstain from it, for fear of putting themselves into the power of those frail and vindictive females. Notwithstanding which care, it sometimes happens, that a woman, weary of her husband, will accuse him of incontinence at this time, merely to get rid of him, and marry another. Among all the high notions which those unhappy people entertain of this grand impostor, there is one, however, which is not so advantageous ; nor, in all probability, so agreeable to him ; viz. that he is, by the dignity of his office, exempt from dying a natural death ; and that, if it should ever happen otherwise to any of them, the world would soon be at an end. To prevent this fatal calamity, they no sooner perceive his life to be in danger, either through sickness or old age, than his successor is impowered to go and dispatch him with his own hand, either by knocking him on the head with a green cudgel, or by strangling him with a rope †, and the executioner is immediately after invested with his dignity.

How this succession is established among them, whether by election or inheritance, our author doth not tell us ;

\* Labat. ex Cavazzi, ubi supra, p. 156, & seq. ibid, p. 160, & seq.

† Idem,

*High regard paid to him in his absence.*

*Other ranks of gangas under him.*

though

though he hath given us a very particular account of his substitutes, and of their different ranks and distinct offices; with which, however, we shall not trouble our readers, since these ministers are no better than a set of tyrannic extortioners, and arrant cheats, like their principal.

*Vain endeavours to abolish idolatry.*

These considerations, joined to the abominable rites which they have introduced into their worship, hath inspired the kings and princes of Kongo with a truly laudable zeal of extirpating so detestable a religion out of their dominions; and they have frequently ordered the secular power to assist the missionaries in so pious a work: but those jugglers have hitherto found means to elude all those endeavours; they no sooner saw themselves in danger of being beset by the royal troops in one place, but they immediately caused their votaries to flee into another, or to retire into impenetrable woods and deserts, or inaccessible mountains, far enough, as they think, out of the reach of the sword, either of the flesh or spirit; so that these zealous princes have at length been forced to stop their pursuit, for fear of occasioning at last some grievous rebellion by it among a barbarous people, so inveterately hardened in their idolatry, and irreconcilably prejudiced against the gospel.

*Superstitions and vices of the converted Christians.*

With respect to the establishment of Christianity in the kingdom of Kongo, those first preachers sent hither for that purpose by the court of Portugal, were priests and monks of the church of Rome, and consequently could not instruct their new converts in any other doctrine or discipline. Accordingly it met with so ready an admission, that it is become the established religion of all the converted provinces of the kingdom. If we may believe the generality of writers, Christianity hath been so neglected, that the major part of those extensive regions have little else but the bare name of Christian. Whilst some appear wholly ignorant of the fundamental doctrines and precepts of Christianity, others pay so little regard to them, that they scruple not to entertain a great number of concubines, over and above their lawful wives; and a third sort appear to be but half converted, and whilst they openly conform to the public worship of their church, privately indulge themselves in the practice of sundry heathenish and abominable superstitions and immoralities.

“ Pigafet. La Croix, Davity, Dapper, Cavazzi, Labat, &c.



It hath been indeed affirmed by some, that the Portuguese who are settled amongst them, have not a little contributed to confirm them in their old superstitions, as well as in the degeneracy of their morals. Some of their missionaries, both in these African parts, as well as in the East and West Indies, have loudly complained of the ill effects which their bad examples had on their new converts: those of the kingdom of Kongo have been obliged to wink at irregularities which they could not reform, and to give up some points to preserve the rest. Neither is it to be supposed that the new clergy, which were ordained from among the natives, would be less remiss than they. However that be, we find here nothing of that pomp and religious pageantry which is practised in other Romish countries; no stately cathedrals, no patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, rich abbeys, and monasteries. We read but of one bishop in all the kingdom, that of St Thomas, who makes his constant residence in the island of Loando, and seldom visits his diocese. The Jesuits, who are every where so very numerous, have here but one convent, and that is also in the same island. They have the care of instructing the Christians of Kongo and Angola, but their number is far too small for two such large kingdoms<sup>a</sup>; and it is no wonder the inhabitants of both live in such profound ignorance of the fundamentals of Christianity; the ambition and avarice of some of their clergy have prevented not only its progress, but its maintaining its ground<sup>b</sup>. Whether it be owing to the neglect of the prelates or princes, or some dislike which the latter may have taken to the former, we do not read that any of them founded either universities or seminaries, or that they have any but inferior schools for boys, who are taught their catechism by the same priests who celebrate mass. We hear nothing of their grand festivals and solemnities, except such as are rather of a secular nature, on which the court and nobles of the kingdom repair to the church in great state, and sumptuous apparel, to hear mass.

*Encouraged by those of the Portuguese.*

*Christianity much decayed.*

The catholics in the duchy of Sogno are reckoned much better Christians; they have a much greater number of churches, in which divine service is performed with greater pomp; their clergy are also more numerous, most of them natives, and the people in appearance such zealous catholics, that they never appear abroad but you see them

*Somewhat better cultivated in the duchies of Sogno.*

<sup>a</sup> Jarric, lib. iii. cap. 4. lib. v. cap. 43. Guin. lib. ii. cap. 5.

<sup>b</sup> Lins. hot, Deser.



loaded with beads, crosses, medals, and other religious insignia ; yet they are not without their old superstitions, and if the saints to whom they apply themselves do not grant their petitions, they seldom fail of addressing themselves to their fetissos, or old heathenish deities. The dukes, or governors of this province, commonly affect to appear in great state when they go to church, adorned with collars of gold, coral beads, and other such fantastic baubles, besides their military weapons. They are preceded by drums, cornets, and other instruments, and surrounded by a body of their guards, with their colours flying. At the head of them march commonly five or six musqueteers, who fire their pieces from time to time as they march, and the procession is closed by multitudes of other spectators and attendants. These princes, as well as those of Bamba and Pemba, have always signalized themselves by their zeal for the Christian religion, and been particularly careful to preserve their respective governments from being corrupted by the heathenish gangas, or priests, lately described ; and, if any such are ever caught within their dominions, they are sure to meet with such severe treatment, that they never attempt to repeat their visit.

*Bamba  
and Pemba.*

*The go-  
vernment  
of Kongo,  
an abso-  
lute monar-  
chy.*

*All lands  
belong to  
the king.*

*Tribute  
paid for  
them.*

The government of this kingdom is monarchical, and as despotic as any in Asia or Africa. The kings are the sole proprietors of all the lands within their dominions, and these they bestow upon individuals, on condition they pay them a certain tribute, and perform particular services. Even the princes of the blood are subjected to the same law, so that there is no person of any rank or quality that can bequeath a foot of land to his heirs or successors ; and when these possessors die, the lands revert to the crown again, even though parcelled out to a number of sub-tenants : so that it entirely depends on the will of the prince upon the throne, whether those lands shall be continued in the same, or be disposed into other hands. The Portuguese, however, since their settling in those parts, have prevailed upon the monarchs to permit the heirs and successors to continue in the possession of such lands, in order to avoid the confusions and commotions which the alienation of them frequently occasioned in the realm, and to encourage the tenants to pay their tribute more readily and exactly than they usually did before. This tribute, or tax, which was affixed to the grant of the lands not only

• Dapper, Labat ex Cavaz. lib. i. cap. 14. p. 238, & seq.

to the governors of the six chief provinces above mentioned, but to several marquises, counts, and other nobles, is expressly ordered to be brought to court once in three years at the farthest; which, joined to the ambition and avarice of those lords paramount, makes them rack the people at a cruel rate, and not only strip them of all they have, but even to sell them, without the least mercy, men, women, and children, for slaves.

*The cause  
of cruel ex-  
tortions.*

What is still more dreadful, these grievous extortions often end in a revolt, and open rebellion; not indeed from the people, who, be their condition ever so bad, can hardly be other than passive; but from their tyrannic governors, who become in time so rich and powerful, as to neglect and refuse to bring their tribute, when summoned by repeated expresses from court, many of whom are purposely way-laid, and murdered in the very frontiers, or clapt into dungeons, and left to die with hunger and misery, especially when those revolted governors live at a great distance from the capital. Nay, they commonly ally with other revolted provinces, and strive to excite the neighbouring governors to join them in the rebellion, and if they refuse, openly invade and plunder their country<sup>d</sup>.

*Revolts  
and rebel-  
lions.*

Pigafetta, and other authors after him, tell us that the crown of Kongo is hereditary, and that the females only are excluded from the succession; but our missionary, who was better acquainted with the political constitution of that kingdom, assures us, that it is partly so, and partly elective; that is, that no candidate can be chosen to it, unless he be of the royal blood. Whether of a nearer or farther branch of it, whether by the male or female side, whether born of the wife, or of a concubine, is the same thing; a bastard being esteemed equally capable of succeeding to the throne, as one born in wedlock. So that, upon the demise of a monarch, there seldom fails to be a great number of competitors to it, though the choice commonly falls on him who brings the best retinue, or greatest number of friends and forces with him, on the field of election, provided he be a Christian of the church of Rome; for, since the conversion of those monarchs to the gospel, none but such are admitted to stand candidates for the crown.

*The crown  
how far  
elective.*

*The elec-  
tion how  
performed.*

The three grand officers who preside over, and must necessarily be present at the election, are the mani ele-

*Who pre-  
side over it.*

<sup>d</sup> Labat, ex Cavaz. lib. ii. cap. 9 p. 3. 309, & seq. Pigafet. Dapper, & al.

*The new  
king how  
and by  
whom pro-  
claimed  
and  
crowned.*

funda, the mani batta, and the count or governor of Sogno. When these perceive that the contest between the competitors is likely to arise to a dangerous height, they summon them to repair to the bishop, or, in his absence, to his vicar, and there to determine it before him. As soon as they have agreed upon a successor, all the grandees of the realm are summoned to appear on a plain near the metropolis of St. Salvador, whence they proceed in pomp to the cathedral, once a most noble structure, built by the Portuguese, but since, through the iniquity of the times, run to decay, and turned into a kind of public hall. Upon these occasions, it hath an altar reared, richly decked, at one end of which is a stately throne, where the bishop or his vicar is seated; and at the other end of it is a chair of state for the mani elefunda, surrounded by the candidates, who know nothing as yet of the person pitched upon, but wait with impatience to hear him declared.

Before the mani proclaims him, he rises from his chair, and kneeling before the altar makes a prayer; then returning to his seat, he pronounces a long elaborate speech on the duties of a monarch, and the manifold cares and difficulties that attend royalty; after which, he declares to the assembly, that he and the other electors, having duly and impartially weighed the merits of the candidate princes, had chosen such a one to the sovereign dignity.

*Is acknow-  
leged by the  
people.*

He then advances and takes the new monarch by the hand, and brings him to the bishop, before whom they prostrate themselves. The king, still upon his knees, receives a short but pathetic admonition from the prelate, in which, among other duties, he exhorts him to shew himself a firm and zealous protector and promoter of Christianity, and an obedient son to the catholic church. The usual oaths are then administered to him, which he pronounces with a loud voice; the bishop then leads him by the hand to the throne erected for him, puts the royal standard into his hands, and the crown upon his head; upon which the whole assembly fall prostrate before him, acknowledge him for their king, with loud acclamations, the sound of martial instruments, and the firing of the whole artillery. The new king assumes the name of Alphonso, as all his predecessors have done ever since the reign of Alphonso, the first Christian king, who took that name at his baptism, as we shall shew more fully in its proper place<sup>c</sup>.

<sup>c</sup> Labat, ex Cavaz. lib. ii. cap. 10. & al. ubi supra.

There



There are two grand ceremonies which follow his coronation. The first and most considerable is that of blessing the people upon certain occasions, and granting the investiture of the principal posts and fiefs of his dominions. The first of these always brings the greatest concourse from all parts, as they set so great a value upon his blessing, that they would esteem themselves worse accursed to be deprived of it by wilful neglect. On the day appointed, the monarch appears in the utmost splendor, surrounded by his guards, and a numerous court, together with all the governors and nobles of the kingdom, magnificently apparelled and attended. The ceremony is performed in a wide spacious plain, sufficient to contain the innumerable multitudes that flock to it: on an eminent part is raised a most sumptuous throne or canopy, from which he can see and be seen by them, and clearly distinguish every one of his ministers and nobles, who are all situated nearer or farther from him, according to their rank.

*The ceremony of the king's blessing the people.*

If any of these have incurred his displeasure, through neglect of duty, or other default, whom, by reason of their great distance from the court, or their being grown too powerful, he was obliged to let go unpunished, he now causes them to be driven from his presence, as wretches unworthy of his blessing. The very disgrace of being thus rejected, would be looked upon as one of the greatest misfortunes that could befall a man of quality; but this is not all: the populace, emulous to express their zeal for their prince, lay violent hands on the obnoxious persons, drag them off without mercy or regard, tear their cloaths off their backs, and treat them with such variety of outrages and indignities, that many of them lose their lives before they can get out of the numerous crowd. By this stratagem those monarchs often rid themselves with ease of such bad ministers, as they could not have attempted to punish any other way, without imminent hazard of seeing their authority despised and insulted.

*His policy in excluding obnoxious subjects from it.*

No sooner are those obnoxious persons removed than the king, addressing himself to the rest of the assembly, exhorts them to continue true and loyal to him, and promises them his favour and protection; then rising from his throne, whilst they prostrate themselves on the ground before him, he gives them his blessing, not in words, but by a peculiar spreading of his arms over them; for which they, on their part, express their joy and gratitude by

*His manner of blessing the rest.*



loud acclamations, and the whole ceremony concludes with the found of various instruments, and the fire of the artillery. Those who have survived the disgrace of being excluded from a share in the blessing, are looked upon with horror and contempt, and esteemed as persons excommunicated, unless they can, by the help of their friends, by rich presents, and submissive behaviour, regain the royal favour <sup>f</sup>.

*The ceremony of granting investitures, &c.*

The other ceremony is performed with much the same pomp, solemnity, and grandeur, and equally shews the deep submission which the people pay to those monarchs. He appears in all his magnificence on the throne, on the day prefixed, whilst all who are candidates for a new post, fief, or investiture, lie prostrate before him, surrounded by vast crowds of spectators, in the same posture. At the third discharge of the artillery, the candidates are regularly introduced to the foot of the throne, accompanied by all their relations and friends, in the richest attire. There, on their knees, at the last step of the throne, the grant is brought to them by some chief minister; which having received with the deepest submission, the king informs them, by a set speech, of the greatness of the favour he bestows upon them, the conditions upon which he grants it to them, the duties he expects from them; to all which they take a solemn oath to conform themselves; then the insignia of their dignity are likewise delivered to them, consisting of a white bonnet, more or less rich, according to the dignity granted, a scymitar, a flag of honour, a chair of state, and a carpet. The whole pageantry concludes with prostrations, clapping of hands, and other slavish attitudes of the person invested, and with the shouts and thankful acclamations of his friends, who extol the royal favour.

*Slavish behaviour of the subjects.*

As soon as the whole business is dispatched, the king rises up, and the ceremony is closed as it began, with the loud huzzas of the audience, and the noise of the artillery and musical instruments, in the midst of which he is conducted to his palace. The ritual of the court of Kongo formerly obliged a petitioner for an investiture, though a count, duke, or prince of the royal blood, to approach the throne not only in the cringing suppliant guise above described, but with his face, head, and shoulders, covered with an ordinary veil, besprinkled all over with dust and dirt, in token of the deepest abasement;

<sup>f</sup> Labat, ex Cavazz. ubi supra. lib. ii. cap. 10. p. 327, & seq. & al. which

which last piece of state seems now wholly set aside, perhaps since those monarchs became Christians; though some other kinds of respect, which they still permit to be paid to them, are of so extravagant a nature, as to come little short of that which they pay to the Supreme Being<sup>e</sup>. Notwithstanding all this pomp and pageantry, it doth not appear that these kings had any thing answerable to it, either in the magnificence of their palaces, court, furniture, or dress, till after the arrival of the Portuguese, when they began to imitate, and by degrees strove to out-do them, in the richness of their apparel, the grandeur and sumptuousness of their retinue and equipage, and the costliness of their furniture. Their garb was formerly made of no richer stuff than a cloth which they wove from a better kind of their aliconda, with which they covered the waist downwards, and bound with a girdle of the same stuff, but more curiously wrought; they likewise affected to hang before them some delicate furs, either of young tygers, civet cats, sables, or martins, which fell down below the knees. Next to their skin they wore an incutto, or rochet, woven of the finest palm-cloth, in the fashion of a net, neatly fringed at the bottom with threads of various colours, and these were turned up on their right shoulder, to give more liberty to that arm; and to the place where they were fastened hung, by way of ornament, the tail of a zabra; and, over the incutto, was a cape which went round their neck and shoulders. On their heads they had nothing but small square caps of red and yellow colour, which was worn rather for show than use. They wore a kind of sandals, or short buskins, on their feet, the sole of which was made of palm wood; and this last they allowed only some of their nobles to wear, whilst the rest of the court and subjects were obliged to go barefoot<sup>b</sup>.

*Much of  
their pride  
learnt from  
the Portu-  
guese.*

*Their dress  
before these  
came.*

But after they became more conversant with the Portuguese, both kings and nobles grew so excessively fond of their finery, and the richness and fashion of their cloaths, that one might see them strive who should most imitate them in both. Short cloaks, scarlet jackets, caps, long spadoes, became now the universal dress of the Kongolese court and nobility; rich cloaths, silks, velvets, gold and silver tissue, lace, fringe, and other finery, were the distinguishing apparel of the great and wealthy. The king's

*The vast  
change  
made to it  
since.*

<sup>e</sup> Vid. Labat. ex Cavaz. lib. ii. cap. 10. p. 322, & al. supra cit.  
<sup>b</sup> Lopez, Pigafat. lib. ii. cap. 7. Davity, Dapper, Labat, & al.

*Stately  
throne.*

*Splendid  
table.*

*Eats al-  
ways  
alone.*

*Guard of  
Anzichi.*

court, retinue, table, furniture, and attendance, his throne, audiences, and ceremonial, were quickly regulated after the Portuguese model; and if there was any difference between them, it was only in the grandeur and magnificence in which the new convert strove to outshine his European ally. His table is covered with variety of the most exquisite meats, his side-board with the most delicate wines and other liquors, and he hath tasters to examine every thing he eats and drinks; his cup and side-board is furnished with the richest vessels of silver and gold, and other precious materials, consecrated solely to his own use, as he always eats alone, and never suffers any person, though of the highest rank, to sit with him, but only to stand about him; and these are princes of the blood, and his other great officers, but with this difference, that the former stand with their heads covered. The throne of state, on which he gives public audience twice or three times a week, is equally grand and costly; the foot of it, which consists of three steps, is covered with Indian tapestry; and the chair of state on which he sits, as well as the table that stands before him, are covered with crimson velvet, adorned with bosses and nails of gold; and, when he sits as judge, or to receive petitions and hear causes, none are permitted to speak to him but his nobles and lords.

He very seldom goes abroad, except on such particular occasions as we have already spoken of, and then he is always attended with a numerous guard, consisting of Anzichi (F), and some other neighbouring nations, in whom he

(F) The Anzichi, or Ansiki, are a barbarous nation situate on the northern confines of the kingdom of Loango, and river Bancaro, formerly described, infamous for their eating human flesh, and exposing it to sale in their shambles. They are, in other respects, a stout and warlike people, and such quick and expert archers, if we may believe our author, that they will hold twenty-eight or more arrows in their hand, and shoot them all successively, before the first lights on the ground.

But what is most valuable in that barbarous nation, is their singular fidelity and loyalty, insomuch that they will sacrifice their lives in proof of it, in defence of their princes, or of their friends and allies. Their king is also king of Miccoco, and hath his residence at Monzol, the capital of Anzico. We know little more of this vast country, except that it hath several mines of copper, and a great quantity of sanders wood, both red and grey; the last of which, called by them chiconga, is the most esteemed,



he puts a greater confidence. These are armed, some with musquets, and others with lances, bows and arrows, but march without any regularity before him. They are followed by crowds of musicians, or players upon martial or other instruments, the sound of which Lopez tells us<sup>1</sup>, could be heard five or six miles off, and served to give notice of his approach. Next to these are the officers of the household, followed by the knights of the Holy Cross, an order instituted by the first Christian king of Kongo, which hath maintained itself in great credit ever since. At length the king appears, preceded by two young 'squires of the noblest families in the kingdom, one bearing the royal shield, covered with a tyger's skin, and the sword of state, adorned with precious stones; the other holds a staff in his hand covered with red velvet, adorned with two massy knobs of silver. On each side of the king ride two officers, who keep fanning him with horses tails, and behind these is a third, who carries a large umbrella over his head, of red damask richly fringed and embroidered.

*Musie.**Order of  
the Cross.**Officers  
near his  
person  
when he  
goes to  
mass.*

He goes to mass with much the same retinue and pomp; and, upon his alighting at church, is led by two masters of ceremonies to his own place, where there is a chair without arms for him to sit upon when he thinks fit, and several velvet or damask cushions to kneel upon. As soon as he is placed, a lighted taper is put into his hand, which he gives to his next page to hold, till the gospel is read, at which time he takes it from him, and holds it up till that is ended, when the priest brings it to him to kiss. At the offertory he marches towards the altar,

*Respects  
paid to  
him there.*

<sup>1</sup> Pigafet. lib. ii. cap. 7.

ed, and used medicinally both by them and the Portuguese.

Their traffic with the Kongoese consists in slaves, both of their own country and of such as they have from the kingdom of Mujak, upon which they border towards the south; linen cloth, elephants teeth, and the above sanders wood; in lieu of which they carry back salt, two sorts of shells called lumache, or sea-snails, which pass with them for money, and are worn by them as

elegant ornaments: they likewise purchase silk, velvet, linen, looking-glasses, and other merchandises brought thither by the Portuguese.

They circumcise their males; but whether out of religion, or from other motives, we cannot learn. In other cases they are idolaters; and, if our authors were truly informed, so inhuman as to eat the flesh not only of the enemies they take in war, but also that of their nearest friends and relations.



where the priest gives him the paten to kiss; then he makes his offering, and retires to his place. He resumes the lighted taper at the elevation of the host, and continues upon his knees during the remainder of the mass; all which time the music continues playing, and the proper anthems are sung; the service being finished, the king sits down, and receives the compliments of his court, and, in return, gives them his blessing and his hand to kiss, which is esteemed a singular favour; which ceremony being ended, he returns to the palace in the same order and pomp<sup>k</sup>.

*His numerous court.*

*Officers.*

The king's court is very numerous and brilliant, consisting not only of the proper officers of his household, but of all the governors of the kingdom; who, when they come to pay their respective homage and tributes, never appear but with a very large and sumptuous retinue; to which we may add the vast number of his generals, and other officers of war, who are likewise obliged to resort thither, and to give an account of the success of their arms, and the state of the forces under their command. Besides these, he hath his auditors, judges of different tribunals, counsellors, and secretaries, whose respective business is quickly dispatched, because all is transacted here in a verbal and summary manner, and without any writings; yet the multiplicity of affairs, of one kind or other, obliges them to appear frequently before him; for, as few of them can read or write, his decisions and orders can only be received by word of mouth, and be conveyed by them to their distant clients, by persons of known character, intrusted with some undoubted token that what they bring is the result of the royal will.

*Slavish state of his courtiers.*

These grand officers, notwithstanding their pretended high titles, vast authority, and outward grandeur, are in fact as great slaves as those they tyrannize over, and live in continual expectation and dread of some signal token of his displeasure.

*Palace.*

The royal palace and apartments are spacious, grand, and commodious; the Portuguese built them mostly after the European manner, for their own use, within the great cincture of the castle; which, after their expulsion, became the residence of the Kongoesse monarchs; but they have been far from keeping up the magnificence of the palace, or even the decency of some stately churches the Portuguese had reared within that inclosure, one of which

<sup>k</sup> Cavazzi ap. Labat. lib. ii. cap. 10. p. 336, & seq. & al. ubi sup. hath

hath now nothing left but bare walls; within which they have caused barracks to be built for their soldiers and life-guard. As to his seraglio (for though he can marry but one wife, yet he may keep as great a number and variety of concubines as he pleases), it is rather a prison than a palace, in which, the women being once entered, are confined during the remainder of their life. Their apartments are surrounded either with strong high walls, or quickset hedges, of such height and thickness, that no mortal can go over or through them: the care and government of this female inclosure is usually committed to some nobleman in the highest esteem and favour with the king.

*Seraglio.*

The lady who is lawfully married to the sovereign, is styled manimombanda, or *mistress of the women*, because she is set over all the rest of his seraglio. Before his marriage he causes a tribute to be levied over all his kingdom, which is to be instead of dowry or appenage, to the young princess, and is called pintello. As soon as the marriage ceremony is over, she is conducted to her apartment in the royal palace, with all the young ladies that are to be her constant attendants, where most of their time is spent in childish amusements; and, if we may believe some authors<sup>1</sup>, they mutually gratify each other's inclinations. The queen permits the greatest part of them to lie out of her apartment at nights; whilst they, in return, wink at her irregularities, and at any bold gallant that dares venture his neck over those high walls or hedges for her sake, and at the risk of a sure and dreadful death, in case of a discovery, though he were of the greatest quality in the kingdom, or even a Portuguese. As for the king, he not only hath free access to her when he pleases, but makes no scruple to take the same freedom with any of those young ladies he likes, as he doth with his other concubines, notwithstanding all the remonstrances of his father confessor, or of the most zealous missionaries. And it is the great liberty he takes with those women which often provokes his queen to infidelity, especially as there is no distinction made between the children he hath by her, and those he hath by his concubines.

*Of the queen and her ladies.*

*Mutual infidelity.*

*Wantonness of her maids.*

His revenue consists chiefly in the tribute that is paid to him by several vassal princes, as those of Angola, Loango, and some other inferior states, which the mani or governors of the six chief provinces are obliged to pay.

*His revenue, whence.*

<sup>1</sup> Cavaz, Dapper, Davity, & al.

*Is the sole  
owner of  
shell-coin.*

*Mines of  
gold why  
neglected.*

*His forces.*

*Garrisons.*

There are others that make him a kind of free-will offering, some of cattle, others of grain, wine, palm-oil, and the like, as an acknowledgement for the lands they hold under him; these are commonly brought to him on St. James's day, when he is obliged to give them a sumptuous feast, and to make them some small presents, which, if we may believe some authors, amounts to within eighty crowns of the full value of what they bring<sup>m</sup>. He is, moreover, the sole proprietor of all the zimbis, or cockle-shells, which are the current coin of this and other neighbouring kingdoms, which bring him, in exchange, slaves, elephants teeth, fanders, stuffs, cattle, millet, and other commodities. This branch is reckoned so considerable, that he prefers it to that of his mines of silver and gold, which he either suffers to lie neglected, or perhaps keeps in reserve, as having a more intrinsic value. The renewing of fiefs and investitures, fines and confiscations, likewise bring him a considerable income; to which we may add that he can levy taxes upon his subjects as often as he pleases; but seldom has recourse to this expedient, except in case of necessity, the poverty of his subjects being such as might drive them into despair, or a revolt, if they were too frequent.

His standing forces are neither numerous, nor well-disciplined, and still worse armed and clothed. After the peace concluded with the Portuguese, wherein these engaged to protect the king of Kongo against his enemies, they advised him to erect fortresses in several parts of his dominions; particularly on the coasts, in the islands Quindangas, and in land at Maopanga, Ambacca, Mafangano, and some other parts of his frontiers, and to garrison them partly with Portuguese, and partly with his own troops; and these last were to be disciplined by the former. But whether the same method was taken with his other troops or no, it is plain they have since returned to their old way, though they are all obliged to appear at their stated musters, where they are usually exercised: but instead of learning the use of offensive weapons, they are chiefly taught to cover their bodies, which are naked from the waist upwards, with their shields made of thick skins; and these they manage with such dexterity, as to avoid the missiles of the enemy. In a word, their army is poorly equipped, either in point of arms or cloathing; and so little disciplined, as to be altogether

<sup>m</sup> Dapper, Afric. sub Kongo.



incapable of making any tolerable resistance against the smallest number of regular forces.

At these annual reviews, this huge army is divided into several bodies, and at the head of each the king appears attended by his court, when he commends or discommends, punishes or rewards, promotes or degrades, as he sees occasion. These bodies engage in sham fights, which often become very serious; every individual being eager, in the heat of action, to shew his valour before the king and court, who appear there in all their pomp and brilliancy.

The musqueteers having been formerly taught the use of fire-arms by the Portuguese, still retain the art of handling them with dexterity; upon these occasions, they make continual discharges with their musquets, and may some time or other prove too hard for those who instructed them. The ceremony of the fight being over, the king commonly treats the combatants with a plentiful supper on the field of battle. The feast usually concludes with music, dancing, and intoxication.

These troops are under their respective mani, or governors of the provinces, and obliged to march under them upon all expeditions; but when the king goes in person, they are all obliged to repair to the royal standard, under respective officers, with their arms and provisions. These last are generally inconsiderable; but in such excursions, they seize on all that comes in their way, without regard to friend or foe, fruits, grain, cattle, beasts, wild and tame, serpents, insects, even the bark and root of trees; all is alike to those famished troops, who leave nothing behind but horrid devastation and misery wherever they pass: the poor inhabitants of the villages and hamlets are forced, at the first alarm of their approach, to retire into the woods, mountains, or other places of safety with their families, cattle, and what other effects they can carry off with them, and to leave their houses, and the rest of their goods, to their mercy. Vast numbers perish in their march, through hunger, sickness, and other accidents, so that the king often loses more than half his army before he comes in sight of the enemy, and is sometimes obliged to return home with less than one third part of it, without having struck a stroke, or done any harm to any but his own subjects.

*How exercised.*

*Musqueteers better disciplined.*

*The troops how levied, to fight under the king.*

*Plunder where they pass.*

*Are often starved.*



*How they  
engage and  
fight, and  
are easily  
routed.*

The opposite armies commonly choose to engage in a spacious plain, where they fall upon each other with great fury; the commander's authority ceasing to have any check upon them from the moment the onset is begun. They continue fighting in this irregular manner, till one side begins to give way; then the rest betake themselves to their heels, without regarding the efforts which their officers make to rally them. The flight of one army never fails of encouraging the other to a vigorous pursuit; during which the slaughter continues without intermission, no quarter being given by either side till the vanquished have got off; upon which the victors return and plunder the enemy's camp, seize all the men, women, and children, sick and lame, whom they brand as their captives, and look upon as the most considerable part of the spoil, and gladly dispatch, as soon as they can, to the sea-side; or to some inland market, to be sold to the Europeans for slaves. As for the wounded, few, if any, survive their defeat, their weapons being poisoned to such a degree, that they cause a speedy and unavoidable death wherever they draw blood, unless the person be provided with some extraordinary antidote.

*Give no  
quarter.*

A victory generally produces a peace; which being concluded upon the victor's terms, hardly proves of longer duration than till the vanquished hath sufficiently recovered his strength to renew the war. We shall conclude this article of the Kongoese monarchs with an account of the honours paid to them at their funerals.

*The funeral  
obsequies of  
their monarchs.*

Before they were converted to Christianity, they used a multitude of superstitious ceremonies, as sacrifices of various kinds, accompanied with suitable music, howling, dancing, and feasting, which lasted a whole week, and were resumed once a year, on the anniversary of the king's demise. All the mani, princes, and governors, were obliged to assist, and to appear with their usual grand retinue, in their funeral guise; and, what was a still greater mark of honour, a certain number, either of his favourite concubines, or of the young ladies belonging to the court, were to accompany the corpse, not only to, but into, the grave. The number of those who were allowed to be buried alive with him, and to accompany him into the other world, seldom exceeded twelve; but that of the candidates to that honour was much more considerable;

*A cruel  
custom formerly  
used.*

† Labat ubi sup. lib. ii. cap. i. p. 13, & seq. Davity, Dapper, & al.  
and

and their struggle so violent, that they even fought for it with surprising eagerness, till the contest was decided by some proper officer of his court, or sometimes by lot; and so happy did the young females think themselves who were nominated to it, that they strove to appear on that occasion with all possible pomp and gaiety. Their near relations seemed no less sensible of the honour done them, and presented them with jewels, the richest cloaths, and other ornaments, to enable them to make the noblest appearance, both at this solemnity, and in the other world. Christianity hath long since abolished that inhuman custom, but hath not been able to suppress the drunken revels which are still indulged, both during the octave of the obsequies, and on the anniversary festivals. In other respects, they are performed after the ritual of the church of Rome, and with the splendor which is used to crowned heads; excepting, perhaps, that those of this kingdom are deposited in a large tomb, or rather vault, in a sitting posture, each upon a stately chair\*.

*Abolished  
since their  
conversion.*

The Kongoesse have no written laws, but custom and tradition serve them instead of a code and commentaries, unless favour or bribery interpose. As the people are naturally brutish, envious, and vindictive, they are so often at law with each other, that the judges would hardly have any thing else to do but to hear and judge causes, had they not as expeditious a method of dispatching them. Every province hath a chief justice, or, as he is styled, a royal judge, both for civil and criminal affairs; from whom, however, an appeal may be made to the king, who presides twice a week at the supreme court, and determines the contest by his absolute authority. The royal judge has inferiors under him in every town and community, from whose sentence the parties may appeal; but this is seldom done, except in matters of great moment, the remedy being generally looked upon as worse than the disease; so that they commonly chuse to acquiesce in their sentence, and, how unjust soever they may think it, seldom venture to complain. Every judge chuses a number of assistants, commonly twelve, out of his own community; and, when the cause is brought before him, hears and examines the parties and their evidence; the plaintiff and defendant are the only pleaders, the former opens and endeavours to prove his cause as well as he can, and the other answers to it in the same manner. If any

*They have  
no written  
laws.*

*The parties  
plead  
for them-  
selves.*

\* Dapper, Afric. & al. sup. citat.

suitor thinks himself incapable of pleading his own cause, he is allowed to substitute a friend, who must be instructed in every thing before he appears at court. When both sides have been heard, the judge recapitulates the whole evidence to his assistants, and asks their opinion; if any difference or dispute arises between them, he endeavours to bring them over to his side; but whether he doth or not, he immediately pronounces sentence, and dismisses the parties; so that the beginning and ending of a lawsuit seldom takes up above two or three hours.

*Their method often too precipitate.*

These judges, who are all venal, often refuse one of the parties a sufficient time to get his evidences ready, for want of which he is unjustly cast. On the other hand, he that gains his cause, especially if by bribery and corruption, is obliged, in some measure, to exhaust himself in feasting his judge, evidence, and other friends several days successively, and in a more expensive manner than his circumstances can possibly afford<sup>t</sup>.

*What crimes are capital.*

The method is much the same in criminal cases, where in only three offences are deemed capital; viz. treason, murder, and forcery. In the former the offender's punishment chiefly depends on the prince's will, who commonly condemns him to the loss of head and estate, the latter of which is confiscated into his treasury. The man convicted of murder is immediately beheaded, unless some atrocious circumstances be thought to require, or the relations of the deceased petition for a more severe death; in which case he is usually delivered up to them, to suffer such punishment as they think proper to inflict.

*Sorcerers burnt alive.*

Magic, or forcery, is punished the more severely by the Christians, and the person convicted of it is immediately burned alive; which punishment seems to have been introduced into this kingdom by the Portuguese. Other punishments, for less crimes, are the bastonade, scourging, fines, and imprisonments. These and many other arbitrary instances of cruelty and oppression, practised by those in authority, and but too frequently allowed and winked at by the prince, though both making open profession of the gospel, doth but still more confirm what hath been more than once observed in this section, both of the low degree to which Christianity hath been reduced, since their first conversion to it, and of the occasion which the example of some Europeans, who are settled there, hath given to that degeneracy. These do not

<sup>t</sup> Labat, *ibid.* cap. ii. p. 23, & seq. & al. *supra* citat.



carry their rigour so far as to sell their insolvent debtors for slaves; neither perhaps doth the government allow them that liberty; but they commonly seize on all his slaves, and keep them for their own use, till they are fully paid; which is, in fact, depriving the poor debtor of his whole livelihood, though not of his liberty. On the other hand, the Kongoese pay still less regard to them, and, if any of them prove insolvent, will seize on any effects of the rest, as if they all stood bound for each other; against which these have no other remedy than opposing force to force; or, as it sometimes happens, when they have the upper-hand, by making reprisals upon them. This plainly shews how little either of them are governed by reason or equity, when they get the power into their own hands. As for the Portuguese, we must here observe, that they are allowed a judge of their own nation, not only for their law-suits among themselves, but between them and the natives, who decides all controversies according to the laws of Portugal; a privilege which is granted to no other Europeans.

*The inferior people tyrannised over by their superiors.*

St. Salvador is the chief place of their residence, and traffic. About four thousand of them are settled in that metropolis, who traffic with most parts of the kingdom; the chief commodities they carry thither are either the product of Brasil, or of the manufactures of Europe. We have elsewhere spoken of the former, which consists chiefly in grain, fruits, plants, and other provisions. The latter usually consists in Turkey carpets, English cloth, and other stuffs; copper and brass vessels, some kinds of blue earthen ware, rings and ornaments of gold, silver, and base metals; coral, glass beads, bugles, and other trinkets; tobacco, wine, brandy, and other spirituous liquors; light stuffs made of cotton, linen, and woollen, for cloathing; and a great variety of tools and utensils. In return for which they carry off such a prodigious number of slaves for the plantations in America, that some make the yearly amount from this kingdom, and some other settlements they have on these coasts, to be little less than fifteen or sixteen thousand.

*The traffic of the Kongoese with Europe, consists chiefly in slaves.*

Here we must observe, however, that the best and most serviceable of them are brought from the kingdom of Angola, the country of Ambuila, the countries of the Jingos, Jagas, and other adjacent parts, where they are



robust and healthy ; whereas those of Bamba, Songo, Pembá, and other provinces of Kongo, being for the most part brought up in sloth, hunger, and ease, either die in their passage, through misery and sickness, or, soon after their arrival, through change of climate, or hard labour. They used likewise to bring from thence elephants teeth, furs, and other commodities of the country ; but as their commerce hath been greatly impaired through the ill usage they formerly received from the natives, that of slaves hath been the chief branch of it ever since.

The Portuguese settled in this kingdom have taught the natives the use of weights and measures, of which they had not, till then, the least notion ; neither have they, to this day, any great use for them, considering their poverty and way of living. The English and Dutch likewise carry on a traffick with these parts, but more particularly with Angola.

*Vast numbers of slaves employed in Kongo ; esteemed their chief trade.*

Besides those slaves which are continually brought from other parts into Kongo and Angola, to be shipped off for America, there remain a sufficient number in the kingdom, to do all kinds of laborious work ; such as building houses, felling and sawing of timber, cultivating the lands ; carrying men, and other burdens ; to work at sundry manufactures ; to be cooks, butchers, huntsmen, fishermen, and to perform all the lower offices of a family. And indeed slaves are reckoned the greatest riches that those of the inferior and even middle rank have to boast of, or to bequeath to their children and relations. The greater number of these a man hath, the more he is respected, and the more comfortably he and his family can live by their labour, whether in that low degree of agriculture which they follow, or in those other trades and manufactures, which bring their masters a still greater gain.

As to the more liberal arts or sciences, we might as well look for them among the Hottentots, as among the Kongoese.

*Iron manufacture very imperfect.*

We need not seek for a more pregnant proof of their invincible indolence than in their iron manufacture, which is an art in great esteem among them, not only by reason of its extraordinary usefulness, but much more on account of a tradition current among them, that its first inventor became afterwards king of Kongo. This, however, has received so little improvement, that a stranger seeing them work at their forge, would be apt to think it still in its infancy with them, as well from the clumsiness of

of their tools, as from their more awkward way of using them. There he would see a workman sitting upon the ground, with an ill-shaped hammer in one hand, his iron in the other, and his anvil, which is no other than a large pebble, or a piece of hard stone, between his legs, upon which he beats and shapes one iron, whilst his foot is moving a wretched pair of bellows to heat another. It is well for them that their iron is good and ductile. They do not dig it out of the mines, but content themselves with such quantity as the heavy rains and torrents bring down with them into the vallies and highways, in a small kind of dust or dirt, for the reception of which they dig holes and trenches. When it is settled at the bottom, and the water taken off or dried up, they cover the whole with charcoal, and by dint of blowing, purge the metal from its dross, and melt it into a lump, which they afterwards fabricate in the clumsy manner above-described; so that even the points of their lances, darts, and arrows, their scymitars, cutlasses, and other weapons, made of that metal, are not only blunt and ill-shaped, but take up four times the time and labour to work them to that imperfect degree, that it would cost an ingenious artist to bring them to the greatest perfection <sup>w</sup>.

*That metal  
how got  
and  
wrought.*

The weaving trade is in a still more pitiful condition, notwithstanding its great usefulness; and one would be astonished how they can make such curious works in that way with such wretched tools; they have neither loom, shuttle, nor other instruments, which are in use in most other nations; they fasten their threads only at both ends, to two pieces of timber, laid upon the ground at no considerable distance, because they never weave a piece of any greater length than will serve for one single garb, such as we have elsewhere described. When they have braced the threads of the woof as tight as they can, they conduct the cross-web between them with singular patience, and as if they were rather darning than weaving. Notwithstanding the length and difficulty of which labour, some of them adorn their webs with sundry curious net, checker, diamond, flower, or other work, and in various colours, with surprising neatness; but, upon the whole, a tolerable weaver, with a proper loom, will be able to do more work in one day than these can do in twenty. We have already observed that these stuffs are made of the bark of trees, particularly the palm, and of some sorts of beaten

*Weaver's  
trade  
clumsy and  
tedious.*

<sup>w</sup> Cavazzi ap Labat. lib. ii. cap. 5. p. 58, & seq. & al pass.

weeds, like our hemp; in the spinning and preparing of which, we may suppose they are hardly more dextrous, or provided with better tools than in weaving.

*Carpenters  
and joiners  
very igno-  
rant.*

If we pass from the weaver's to the joiner's or carpenter's shop, we shall find their whole apparatus to consist in a mis-shapen ax, and in a strange kind of tool, one end of which is like a chissel, and the other sharp-pointed like a puncheon, both fastened to a wooden handle. The work produced by these is of a piece with the tools, that is, clumsy and ill contrived. The potters, for want of a wheel, shape their clay by the help of a piece of a gourd or pumpkin, which serves them as a mould; and, instead of an oven or kiln, they content themselves with burning a quantity of straw over and about it; the reader may thence judge of the beauty and goodness of the work, as well as of the brightness of their invention in the mechanic arts. We shall only observe in this place, that in making of their ordinary huts, hammocks, boats, nets, and the like, every one is his own workman; and that in every thing they betray not only an extraordinary want of genius, but also of industry\*.

*Potters  
still more  
so.*

*Lazy way  
of travel-  
ling.*

A farther proof of their natural indolence and sloth, is their way of travelling. They have neither coaches, carts, beasts of burden, or even saddle-horses, mules, or asses, as in other countries, but all is carried on the shoulders of slaves, be it ever so far, and the roads ever so bad. The richer sort commonly travel in hammocks, with a covering over them, to shelter them from the sun, and perhaps a running slave with an umbrella in his hand, to shade his master on the sunny side, and often only for grandeur and ostentation. These hammocks, some of which are made of strong stuffs, and others of net-work, are fastened at both ends to a pole, and carried upon the shoulders, or upon the heads, of two stout slaves, who trudge and sweat under their burdens, and are relieved, at proper turns, by two others, while the master lies lolling within, smoking, or sleeping.

Some of these carriages are borne by four slaves, like one of our biers, and made in the fashion of the palankins of Asia, with a canopy above, and curtains around, and an easy couch and bolster underneath. These are still more convenient to travel in, and require a greater number of slaves: on that account, they only fit for persons of distinction; and are commonly very

\* Ibid. p 62, & seq.



richly embroidered with gold, silver, and flowered with silk. Those of the lower rank, on the contrary, content themselves with being carried sitting in a kind of open chair, or even a broad leathern strap, like a swing, and fastened to a pole like the hammock, holding an umbrella in their hands. All these ways of travelling require, besides the slaves of relay, as we may style them, another set to carry provisions, tents, and other conveniencies for the journey; and those who have not a sufficient number of them, may hire of those that have.

From what has been said the reader may easily judge how chargeable, inconvenient, and tedious, their mode of travelling is; for even those who are best attended for expedition, must be contented to let their porters and carriers rest, so often, and upon so many occasions, some real, and others pretended, that they seldom make half the speed they might. But could they be forced to do so, yet the badness and difficulty of the roads, the want of them through most parts of the kingdom, where they must frequently cut their way through woods, through thickets, full of thorns and brambles, or steer through pathless desarts and burning sands, to say nothing of their high and almost impassable rocks and mountains, the danger of wild beasts, venomous insects, and bands of banditti, to to which one is continually exposed the farther one moves from the maritime provinces. The most easy and delightful conveniences for travelling appear tedious, irksome, and in some cases dreadful; especially, if we add to them the many large and rapid rivers one is obliged to cross, with the most imminent danger of one's life, sometimes only by the help of a rope half rotten, that is thrown over them, and fastened to a tree, and at the best in some old canoe<sup>u</sup>.

One would imagine, that the Kongose monarchs should long ago have obliged their viceroys and governors, to take care to have all the great roads through their respective provinces made convenient, easy, and safe, not only for the merchants and passengers, but likewise for their own troops, when they are sent to quell some revolt, rebellion, or invasion, as they often are, in one part or other of the kingdom; for want of which precaution, one half of the forces perish in the way, through hunger,

<sup>u</sup> Cavazzi ap. Labat, lib. i. cap. 23. p. 494, & seq. Dapper, & al.



fatigue, and variety of diseases, before they can reach the enemy.

From Loanda to Massangano, and Ambaica, in the kingdom of Metamba, and in that of Angola, between its capital and Arajo and Cassingo, the roads are pretty broad and commodious, as well as more frequented, and safe from banditti, and other wild and dangerous enemies: but, excepting these, the rest of the country may be justly termed a continued wilderness, through which there is no other path, except what the passengers are obliged to make to themselves, through vast heaths and plains, thick set with thorns and briars, or through thick forests, craggy rocks and mountains, at immense labour and charge, with extreme hazard of their lives from wild beasts and venomous insects; and this is still the more surprising, as not only the mercantile part of the people, the king's forces, and officers of the government, but even the most lazy and indolent of the people, are ever in motion, and, through a lightness natural to them, are ever shifting from place to place with their indigent families, in hopes of amending their wretched condition; insomuch, that the lower class of the people, which is by far the greater part, may be more truly styled travellers and wanderers, than inhabitants of the kingdom. They are still in a more deplorable case, whenever sickness overtakes them in those desert tracts, which often happens in those sultry and immoderate climes, where, being destitute of all proper help, they are left to perish in the utmost misery.

*Trouble  
and danger  
of travel-  
ling.*

Even to those who travel most at their ease, and have all their conveniencies and attendance of servants with them, it often happens, that, instead of the regular rest which nature requires, after a long fatiguing night's journey, they are obliged to fortify their little camp all around with thick thorn hedges, boughs of trees, and other fences, against wild beasts, and keep continual watch against them, as well as against bands of robbers, which infest most parts of the kingdom. We shall say nothing of those still more subtle enemies which steal upon them unperceived, such as serpents, vipers, scorpions, and a variety of other venomous creatures, which lie concealed, perhaps, in those very hedges which they make for their defence; these are therefore the most dreadful enemies they have to encounter, since there is no fence or weapons that can be of any service against them; whereas the firing of a single musket will scare away not only lions, tygers, and other voracious beasts, but even a whole drove of banditti.

These

These various dangers considered, our readers will easily judge, how short and interrupted their repose must be, even after the greatest fatigues; but here it must be observed, that sound sleep is the least thing the Kongoese covet or require: instead of which, one part commonly betake themselves to singing, dancing, and smoking, whilst the other takes a short nap by turns; after which they rise as much refreshed as if they had enjoyed a sound night's repose, and, for the most part, with as sparing a share of diet as they have of sleep.

The houses of the Kongoese are no better than round sorry huts, low and ill-built, upon the naked ground, ill-contrived within, and poorly thatched with straw or fern, as if only calculated to defend them from the sun, rain, and wind; they have no windows, nor any light but from the doors, which are commonly so low, that the shortest man must stoop to go in and out. They are so slight, that they are easily carried off by a moderate land-flood, or whirled away by a blast of wind; they are more or less spacious, according to the largeness of the family, who live promiscuously in them, and at night light a fire in the center, the smoak of which makes its way through the thatch, whilst they lie around it, with their heads towards the wall. Those, indeed, of the city of St. Salvador, and some other towns of note, are somewhat higher, better thatched, whitened within and without, and divided into apartments, the chief of which have their floors matted. Those which belong to persons of rank and substance are still more capacious, and have a kind of hall to receive their visitors, besides distinct apartments for their wives, servants, and slaves, which stand like so many houses, either adjoining to each other, or inclosed within the same cincture.

The houses belonging to the Portuguese are commonly built of brick and mortar, after the European manner, and, for the most part, pretty well furnished and adorned. Those likewise of the city of Loanda, the capital of Angola, the place of the greatest commerce in the whole country, are built after the same manner, and some of them make a tolerably grand appearance; but neither of them have been able to raise the emulation of the Kongoese to build their own after a better, or even after a stronger manner, than we have described; though, besides all the inconveniencies already mentioned, they are still liable to a much greater and more dreadful evil; namely, that of being infested by serpents, and venomous

insects of various kinds, which frequently make a most dreadful havock among them \*.

*Their mean furniture.*

The furniture of their houses is much of a-piece with their structure; it consists chiefly of some few ill-contrived instruments for agriculture, a hatchet to fell timber, a cutlass, which they commonly carry about them when they are travelling, or going to war; some few calabashes, wherein to store their provisions; a pot, a kettle, a ladle, and a few earthen platters, and a hand-mill to grind their corn. Their best bedding is a large coarse sackcloth, filled with straw or leaves; with a slight covering, and perhaps a log of wood instead of a pillow.

*Luxury.*

It must be owned, however, that since the settlement of the Portuguese amongst them, their princes and great lords, who had till then affected the same simplicity and meanness, have begun to imitate them in some degree in the sumptuousness of their furniture: but even all this finery consists in having their floors nicely matted, or covered with a fine carpet, and their mud walls hung with tapestry; in a few large chests, ranged about their apartments, wherein they lay up their provisions, and over them hang their armour, belts, and weapons. Above the rest, they have a large and gaudy umbrella or two, together with some other costly baubles, which they buy of the Portuguese merchants, as looking-glasses, pictures, cabinets, caskets, stately couches, and easy chairs, tabrets, cushions, plate, china, glasses, wardrobes filled with rich cloaths, and superb household furniture, with which their halls and chief apartments are adorned: but these are only to be met with in the palaces of some of the chief princes and viceroys †.

*Marriage.*

We have already taken notice, that polygamy was allowed all over the kingdom of Kongo, until the time of their embracing Christianity; since which period, the missionaries have in vain endeavoured to persuade them to be contented each with one wife. To be obliged to marry one wife, and to be confined to her during life, is looked upon, even by the most open professors of Christianity, as so unreasonable and intolerable, that they would sooner renounce it than submit to such a state of continence; and it is merely to avoid a total apostacy, that those good fathers have been obliged to wink at sundry irregularities which those voluptuous converts fell into, by way of salvo: among which, that of their having a multitude of concu-

\* Labat ap. Cavaz. ubi sup. ad fin.

† Ibid. lib. i. cap. 21.



bines, besides the lawful wife, is far from being the worst ; for many of them, looking upon that liberty as no less inconsistent with the marriage institution, than confinement to one wife is to their vicious inclination, carefully avoid the fetters of the one, and indulge themselves in all the excesses of the other.

Even those who seem to comply most strictly with the laws of the church, with respect to marriage, reserve to themselves the liberty of conversing with the person they have made choice of for a wife, and to enjoy with her all the privileges and endearments of the nuptial commerce, for two or three years before they will venture to tie the indissoluble knot ; both her's and his relations allowing it to be reasonable that he should make so full a trial, before he is obliged, by the marriage ceremony, to confine himself wholly to her. If, during that time, any thing happens that displeases him or her, he makes no difficulty to send her away, nor she to withdraw herself from him ; nor doth such a parting bring any disgrace upon either of them, or prove an obstruction to their being married to some other person.

*Ill customs winked at.*

It must be owned, however, that the relations on both sides, as well as the priests or missionaries, will interpose their good offices to reconcile them, especially if any children have been born during that time, who, unless the marriage ceremony ensue, must be looked upon as bastards ; but, even in this case, the Kongoese make so little difference between their legitimate and illegitimate issue, that they often prefer the latter to the former in the succession, or at least put them all upon an equal footing, that is, esteem them all indifferently, as so many young creatures under their power, to be disposed of, or used as they think fit ; so that there is seldom seen any natural affection between parents and children, or the husbands and wives, but rather, for the most part, jealousy and hatred ; or, at best, a strange indifference and coldness reign through the whole family.

*Bastards.*

This being the melancholy footing on which matrimony stands among them, our readers must not expect much ceremony, much less gallantry in their courtship. Among those of the middle rank, when a young woman is thought by her friends fit for a husband, she anoints herself with oil, paints her body all over with a red sort of wood, and confines herself to a private or obscure hut for a whole month ; during which time, a number of young candidates attend her every day, bringing her some venison, or

*Courtship.*



fowl, or flesh of their own killing, fruits, and other presents. At the month's end, she declares for him who hath served her best, who immediately furnishes her with the best cloaths and ornaments that he can afford. Then the marriage ceremony is performed with more or less profusion, according to their circumstances<sup>y</sup>.

*Matrimony, how celebrated.*

The case is somewhat different with respect to those of a higher rank, whose views commonly are to obtain the woman as soon, and to procrastinate the nuptial rite as long as they can. If one of this sort can but obtain the good liking of the person he hath fixed his affection upon, by suitable presents, and can obtain the consent of her parents, to the three years trial; all the other preliminaries are quickly adjusted, and she is brought with as little noise and shew as possible to his house, where she forthwith begins her state of probation. The nuptials are not celebrated till the term agreed on is expired, nor sometimes even then; because the stipulated dowry is to be paid at the same time; a circumstance which induces many of them to defer them as long as they can, notwithstanding her earnest solicitation for the concluding ceremony, which alone gives her the title and privilege of a wife.

As soon as she hath prevailed upon him to appoint the day, notice of it is sent to all his and her relations, who never fail to appear, on that occasion, in their best attire. When they are all met at his house, the husband publicly declares his intention of making her his lawful wife; upon which they break out into their usual congratulations and good wishes. The priest comes in and performs the ceremony; then follows the payment of the dowry, and the exchange of some mutual presents, suitable to their condition.

*Sumptuous banquet.*

The marriage-ceremony is succeeded by a sumptuous banquet: the very poorest of them will, on these occasions, sell a child or two to purchase a cow, or an ox, and some Portuguese wine or brandy, to entertain their guests. The repast commonly lasts till after sun-set, or rather as long as there are any victuals or liquor left; for the Kongose, accustomed to a sparing diet, commonly repair to these feasts with such craving appetites, that if they did not meet with a suitable affluence, their panegyrics on the master, of which they are very lavish, would quickly be turned into the most stinging reproaches.

<sup>y</sup> Davity, Dapper, Pigafet, & al. sup. cit.

No sooner are the provisions devoured, than they begin dancing and drinking, which continue till next morning, when they retire<sup>z</sup>.

As for their music, if it is still so barbarous and irregular since it hath received some improvements from the Portuguese, who have introduced several musical instruments amongst them, we shall hardly think it an exaggeration, when we are told it was formerly fitter to scare wild beasts, than to delight an European ear. There is indeed nothing in their voices, language, or accent, but what seems more adapted to affright than to please; and their most fervent shouts and gestures of joy and pleasure might be easily mistaken by a stranger for the dismal outcries of persons in distress or torment. They are so insensible to the most melodious harmony, that our most excellent compositions can only provoke their laughter and contempt, except where there is something harsh and warlike to affect them; and hence it is also that the Portuguese have been able to introduce so few musical instruments but those of that kind.

*Their music very rough.*

Those that usually attend their monarchs, whenever he appears in public, are the trumpet, cornet, French-horn, and fife, most of which are of different sizes, and by their different tones make a tolerable contrast, considering the unskilfulness of the players, who seem perfect strangers to rule and harmony, and are therefore best heard by an European at a distance. They will likewise prove of singular advantage to him in drowning the still more disagreeable discord of their fingers, which would otherwise be intolerable. These various wind-instruments, which were at first introduced by the Portuguese, have ever since continued to make a considerable part, not only of their monarch's retinue, but likewise of their princes and great men, who affect to have a number of them about them wherever they go. As for the common people, they are contented with their fifes and tabors, at their weddings and other rejoicings.

*Musical instruments.*

Besides the wind-instruments above mentioned, they have some stringed ones, which, by their rude construction, seem to be natives of the country: their nsambi somewhat resembles the Spanish guitar, but is without bottom; the strings of it are made of the fibres of the palm, or some other bark, and would emit a tolerable

*Stringed instruments.*

<sup>z</sup> Cavazzi ap. Labat, ubi sup. vol. i. cap. 19. Pigafet, Dapper, & al.

found, were it tuned and touched by a skilful hand. The marimba hath something more curious and compound in its structure, and consists of fifteen or sixteen small calabashes, of different sizes, fastened to a flat board, by strings that go across the mouths of them, and which, being touched by small pieces of wood, like the sticks of our dulcimers, yield an agreeable variety of sounds. This is by far the sweetest of all their stringed-instruments, when well-tuned and played. Their drums are made of a long hollow trunk of a tree, with one single skin stretched over one end of it, the other being left open; they are beat either with the fists, or by sticks made of some heavy wood, and are used at their featings and dancings, as well as in the army; they are called ngambo, or ingombo, and give but a dull heavy sound, which is raised either by that of the fife, or the longa, which consists of two or more small bells, such as are hung about the necks of our carriers horses. The rest of their instruments are still more rude and uncouth, and not worth any farther notice <sup>a</sup>.

*Drums.*

*Small bells.*

*Dancing.*

Their dancing being well-suited to their music in roughness, consists in a promiscuous round of men and women, all striving who shall shew the greatest agility and variety of gambols, contorsions, and indecent postures. The Kongoesse are extremely fond of these diversions, and spend whole days and nights at that severe exercise, without any refreshment; they have a great variety of these dances, and those who invent new ones are held in the highest esteem in the whole canton. It often happens that they heat their blood to such a degree, with those songs and dances, that they are seized with a kind of phrenzy, which drives all the rules of the dance out of their heads, sets them a singing, and acting something new, till they fall into such a general confusion and disorder of singing, roaring, and lewd actions, that a stranger would be apt to think himself present at some bacchanalia, or among some of the unconverted Kongoesse, or the still more barbarous Giagas, where those dances are accompanied with the most shocking and lascivious gestures and actions that can well be imagined.

*Diseases.*

One would imagine that these fatiguing exercises, in which they spend so much of their time, joined to their spare diet, their constant anointing their bodies, frequent bathing, smoaking, and freedom from worldly cares and

<sup>a</sup> Del is vide Labat ex Cavaz. lib. ii. cap. 4. pass. & al. sup. citat.



toils, should exempt them from most distempers, in a climate so serene and hot, and a soil for the most part stony, sandy, and dry; and it must be owned that they are thereby kept free from a multitude of loathsome distempers, which luxury and intemperance have introduced among us; but nevertheless they are subject to some diseases, which rage with great fury, and make terrible havock among them. They have neither physicians, surgeons, physic, nor any other assistance than that of their pretended conjurers, who set up for curing all diseases, wounds, and other ailments, by their enchantments, and who are a set of the most ignorant and rapacious cheats and blood-suckers, have nothing in view but sordid gain, and even increasing their patient's misery, at the hazard of their lives, in order to extort a greater reward for the promised cure<sup>b</sup>. So besotted are even they who make open profession of Christianity, to those deluding jugglers, that the missionaries, who commonly practise physic and surgery with good success, can hardly prevail upon them to put themselves under their care, though they never pretend to expect any return, but bestow all their pains and medicines upon them gratis. What is still more surprising is, that if any of them, after having tried in vain all the pretended helps of those heathenish charms, agree at last to submit to be cured by a missionary, they prove such untoward and untractable patients, that they will submit to no prescribed rule or regimen, but commonly elude, by their perverseness, all the skill and care of their charitable physician, and render abortive the effects of his best medicines, by their wilful opposition to his directions<sup>c</sup>.

*No physicians.*

Among the diseases which make the most terrible and destructive havock, that which we commonly style the venereal, and they chiranga, the just consequence and natural effect of their boundless incontinency, may be well considered as one of the chief. They reckon four kinds, or we should rather choose to call them, four degrees or stages of it, the lowest of which is dreadful enough, one would think, to put a curb to their excessive lewdness, seeing its acrimony, for want of proper discharges, raises the most dreadful ulcers in the mouth, throat, and joints, and not only deprives them of the use of their limbs, but causes the most excruciating pains all over the body.

*The venereal disease.*

*First degree of it.*

<sup>b</sup> Labat, Davity, Dapper.    <sup>c</sup> Labat ex Cavaz. lib. i. cap. 22. p. 560, & seq. Dapper Kongo, & al. ubi sup.



*Second.*

The second covers the whole skin with the most loathsome and corrosive ulcers, attended with an intolerable stench, which being mostly exposed to view in a country where they go almost naked, cannot be beheld without the utmost horror.

*Third,*

The third degree commonly seizes on the soles of the feet, raises a tumour in them of the shape and bigness of a middling mushroom, which, if not timely and skilfully cauterised, quickly rots the bones, and sends the unhappy patient out of the world in the most dreadful convulsions.

*Fourth.*

The last, and most terrible of all, conveys its deadly poison into the whole habit, and into the very marrow, destroying, in a very little time, the strongest constitution, taking away the use of all the limbs and senses, and leaving the unhappy person wholly insensible of every thing, but of his inexpressible anguish and misery. Among those who have the good fortune to escape with their lives, there are few to be seen who do not carry about them some brand or mark of their incontinence, either by the loss of a nose, lip, or ear, or by some scars and ulcers, or even by a loathsome scurf spread over their skin like a leprosy, occasioned either by the unskilfulness and ignorance of the doctor, or, which is oftener the case, by the perverseness and irregularity of the patient<sup>d</sup>.

*Diarrhœa.*

The next raging and destructive disease, and most difficult to cure, is the diarrhœa, chiefly owing, according to the authors last quoted, to their mean diet, and especially to their excessive eating of fruits, which, by their cold nature, destroy the tone of the stomach, obstruct digestion, and fill it with crudities, relaxing the bowels from their retentive quality, and causing a general disrelish to every kind of nourishment. The most common remedy they use against it, is girding the patient as tight as possible round the body, and anointing him with oil of moni, commonly called by botanists ricinus Americanus, and vulgarly, palma Christi, which is of a hot and active nature, and giving him plenty of nicaffo and chiroco, or other such like warm fruits, boiled in water, or baked on the embers, to eat. They likewise make use of fundry sorts of cordials against it, and sometimes of bathing in warm water; but as none of these remove the cause, great numbers of them are carried off by it at the return of the season; so that all the benefit they receive by these

<sup>d</sup> Ibid. ibid.

remedies, proves, for the most part, rather a short relieve than a thorough cure.

A third destructive disease amongst them, which in a short time carries them off by thousands, and frequently depopulates whole villages, is the small-pox, the virulency of which is chiefly owing to their want of sense in using proper precautions and remedies against it, and leaving nature to take its own course. They suffer the sick and well to live and lie promiscuously, and to indulge themselves in every thing that their appetites crave. What is still worse, they suffer them to bathe frequently in cold water, which stops the pores, already sufficiently clogged by their daily anointing their skin with oil; so that, for want of a proper outlet, it runs into a confluent pox, or seizes their vitals, and carries them off in a few days <sup>a</sup>. *The small-pox ill treated.*

A fourth disease which rages here, especially among those who live on the sea-coasts, or use the sea, is a grievous swelling in the groin and lower belly, occasioned, as is supposed by the excessive heats to which they are exposed in those hot climes. The pain which this disorder occasions is so acute and violent, that the patient quickly becomes delirious. The remedies they use against it are of the cooling kind, particularly the herb bichio, from which the Portuguese have denominated that distemper, which is likewise very common in Brasil, and other parts of America.

Fevers, attended with violent pains in the head, are likewise very rife and dangerous, especially in the winter, when the great rains render the air unhealthy and infectious. Against these they make use of the sandal wood, whether red or grey, though the former is most esteemed: this being reduced into powder, and mixed with palm oil, they make into an excellent ointment, with which they anoint the patient all over. But if it doth not allay the pain in the head, they have recourse to bleeding in the temples by incision and suction <sup>b</sup>. *Fevers and their cure.*

The last distemper we shall mention is that which they call npichi, much like our violent colics, occasioned by their unwholesome diet and water, which fills them with crudities; against these disorders they scarce use any other remedy than abstinence, and will be two or three days, or even more, without eating or drinking. The Europeans are no less subject to the same disorders, upon their first settling amongst them, especially if they are ob- *Frequent colic, whence.*

<sup>a</sup> Ibid. *ibid.*

<sup>b</sup> Davity, Dapper, & al.

liged to conform to their way of living. The change of diet and liquors, joined to the excessive heat of the climate, soon begin to display their pernicious effects on them by the excessive effervescence of the blood, which can be kept under by no other method than by frequently letting it out, and in such great quantities as would be deemed extremely dangerous in their own country; so that, to use our author's words, they must make what haste they can to exchange their old blood for a new sort, which is more suitable to the country. Yet doth not all this phlebotomy, joined to other precautions and remedies which they use, prevent vast numbers dying, before they can be seasoned to their climate and aliments. But to return to the Kongoesse.

*Manual  
operations  
clumsily  
performed.*

They are still more awkward at their manual operations, and cure of wounds, to which defect it is owing, next to the badness of their blood, that the smallest pimple, contusion, or scratch, often degenerate into loathsome and painful ulcers, which the warmth of the climate quickly fills with worms, and stench, or incrustates with a nauseous scurf. They have the use of phlebotomy, but, for want of lancets and incision-knives, perform the operation in an awkward manner, though in imitation rather of our cupping than bleeding: instead of cupping-glasses, to which they are strangers, they use a small calabash, horn, or shell, perforated on the top. These they apply to an arm, leg, belly, or head, or any other part which they imagine to be the seat of the distemper, after having first made a deep gash with a knife in the skin. They next put their mouth to the whole of the calabash, or horn, and suck the blood till it is full. This they repeat till they have drawn a sufficient quantity of it from the patient: in some cases they will, instead of a calabash, make use of an earthen pot or pipkin, such as they boil their victuals in, and apply it with lighted tow, as we do our cupping-glasses.

*Funeral ob-  
sequies.*

We shall conclude this section with an account of their funeral obsequies, in which, notwithstanding their parsimony, poverty, and want of natural affection for their nearest relations, they strive to appear profuse and generous. The rich and great are not only profuse to a high degree, but likewise extremely bountiful in assisting the poor with such things as they are not able to purchase on these occasions; on the other hand, these last, notwithstanding their extreme aversion to discover their own poverty, will not scruple to apply to the former, and even

to.



to the king and princes for their assistance, when their friends and acquaintance are not in a capacity to help them. So that the most indigent among them are commonly enabled to wrap up their dead in a piece of coarse cloth of the manufacture of their country, and to have the bier decently covered with mats; whilst the better sort array their own with the same fine European linen cloths which they themselves wear, and cover the bier with black cloth.

We have already spoken of the obsequies performed to their kings, to which we shall only add, that it is looked upon as a great crime to shed tears for them, and a person who should be convicted of it would be severely punished. They keep certain men in pay, whose business it is to go to all the public places of the city or town, and to remind the subjects of his death, by the mournful sound of their ivory cornets; most probably to induce them to pray for him, and to inspire them with a due respect for his successor. The princes and nobles affect to be interred in vaults wainscotted round, and hung with black, the entrance of which is closely stopped, to prevent any nauseous smell; whilst two of their old domestics are hired to guard the place by turns, and to pray for the deceased; other prayers, and masses for their repose, are likewise ordered to be offered on the anniversary of their decease, and on All-souls day, at which times their graves are opened, and the hangings exchanged for new ones. Among those that are still unconverted, several other superstitious ceremonies are used towards deceased great men, such as bringing rich offerings to their graves, and burying alive one or more of their wives with each<sup>c</sup>.

*No weeping for the king.*

In the kingdom of Metamba, which is subject to Kongo, but hath been but imperfectly converted, they indulge themselves in several strange ceremonies towards persons near expiring, altogether cruel and unnatural, though under the specious colour of love and friendship. On pretence of shortening their agonies and misery, long before the breath is gone out of a man's body, they pull him out of his bed or hammock, by the arms and legs, and tossing him up into the air, with most doleful outcries and dreadful howlings, let him fall on the ground; where, after having viewed him attentively for a while, they throw themselves promiscuously upon the body, embrace, kifs,

*Some barbarous customs retained.*

<sup>c</sup> Vide Labat, ubi supra, p. 388, & seq. Jarric. Pigafet. Davity, Dapper, & al. supra citat.



and mourn over it, rolling themselves with it on the earth in a frantic manner, till they are quite exhausted. They then dress the body in the most decent manner, after which the oldest person in the family, sprinkles him all over from head to foot, with a kind of meal, whilst the rest of the by-standers sing some mournful dirge over it, accompanied with woeful outcries; and in this manner he is conveyed to his grave on a bier, neatly covered with mats, and laid in the ground.

*Customs of  
the Giagas,  
and other  
heathens.*

Among the heathenish parts, especially the Giagas, they dance about the grave in a frantic manner, bring them victuals, drink, and other conveniencies; and, as they are divided into a variety of sects, each observes its peculiar customs. Some lay the body flat on its back; some on the right or left side, and order the grave accordingly; some lay the body on the surface of the ground, and raise a mound of earth, stones, and pallisades, to a considerable height, planting here and there some stakes, on the top of which they fix death's heads, flags, and other ensigns of distinction. Some of those that were most respected among them, instead of a grave or monument, are only anointed all over with some resinous substance, and left to lie naked on the ground, with a guard over them, till all the flesh, skin, and entrails are rotted; then they carefully gather the bones, which they deposit in wooden boxes, and carry about with them wherever they go, as extraordinary relics, and singular preservatives.

*Monuments  
how erect-  
ed.*

The tombs above mentioned are so ordered as to distinguish the condition of those that lie buried under them; those of high rank have commonly a seat or chair, with a bow, arrows, and other martial weapons, fixed on the top; and the handicrafts-men place some of the tools belonging to their trade, or some other coarse hieroglyphic upon them. Their funeral dances for a great man, are always regulated by a person chosen for that purpose, and last eight whole days without any intermission, except whilst they take the refreshment of eating or drinking, or a short repose; and great care is taken to have the feast well supplied with provisions; the residue of which they throw upon the dead corpse at every meal they take, which in these hot climates increase the stench of the body to an intolerable degree; though custom, and the pleasure which they think the deceased receives from the whole ceremony, make it all easy and pleasant to them. Upon these occasions they never fail butchering a number

*Dances at  
their fune-  
rals.*

of

of human victims, the flesh of which they devour with particular relish †.

Both rich and poor observe a kind of mourning for their near relations ; it begins with a close confinement and abstinence from all refreshment, which is to last three whole days. Then those of the common sort shave their whole head, and anoint themselves all over with oil, upon which they rub such a quantity of earth and dust, and dried leaves of various sorts, as gives them the most dreadful appearance. But those of a higher rank content themselves with shaving the upper part of their heads, and binding it about with a list of cloth, linen, or leather ; and confining themselves in their houses eight whole days ; after which they gradually return to their former way of living.

*Their  
mourning  
how per-  
formed.*

We shall conclude this article and section with a strange and barbarous notion which the Kongoesse entertain concerning dying persons, that they are just upon passing from a wretched and troublesome life into a state of ease and happiness ; from which opinion they absurdly infer, that it is the most charitable kindness one can perform, to accelerate their deliverance by any proper means. Hence it happens, that even among the more regular Christians, a person is no sooner observed to be near expiring, than he is stunned by the hideous outcries and howlings of the family ; insomuch that their priests and missionaries are scarce able to perform the last offices to them with any tolerable degree of decency. This is, however, but a mild treatment, compared to what is commonly practised among the vulgar, where they strive who shall dispatch the dying person soonest, by stopping his mouth and nose, thumping him upon the breast with all their strength, and other such inhuman usage ; which yet they imagine to be the most acceptable to him, as it shortens his last struggles and agonies, and sends him quickest into a state of rest and felicity.

† Labat, ubi sup. p. 400, & seq. & al. sup. citat.

## S E C T. III.

*The Origin, Antiquity, Foundation, and History of the Kingdom of Kongo.*

*Ancient  
state of  
Kongo fa-  
bulous and  
uncertain.*

*The Kongo-  
ese had  
chronolo-  
gers.*

*The time  
of their  
monarchy's  
foundation  
uncertain.*

FROM what we have formerly had occasion to observe, that the Kongoese were utter strangers to writing and letters, till the Portuguese introduced both among them, it will hardly be expected we should be able to look back very far into their antiquity, or offer any-thing new concerning their origin and history before that time, unless we were to fetch it from their fabulous traditions, which would be entertaining our readers with an ill-concerted series of the most incredible events; in the compiling of which national pride, assisted by a warm imagination, rather than a tenacious and faithful memory, had the greatest share. To this we may add, that they were no better chronologers than historians, and knew nothing of computing the time by years, but only by moons, till they were taught it by the Europeans, after their conversion to Christianity. They were even strangers to the distinctions of hours of day and night, nor could ever quote any past transaction, but by saying that it happened in such a king's reign <sup>b</sup>. Hence it is that there is no possibility of fixing either the time of the foundation of their monarchy, though so small a distance of time from the epocha of the first arrival of the Portuguese, nor even of obtaining an authentic series of the kings that filled the throne from the reign of Luqueni, their first monarch and founder, down to that epocha, though his successors occupied it during a considerable space after their arrival.

But though we cannot possibly fix the time of so remarkable a transaction, our readers will not be displeased if we give them the best account we can of it, stripped of all the fabulous stories with which it has been encumbered by the Portuguese. This æra deserves our notice the more, as that vast tract of land was then divided into a great number of petty states and variety of governments, and all of them reduced under the obedience of that enterprising warrior; besides a great number of others which are since dismembered from it, under the reigns of his successors, and many others, of which the Portuguese have made themselves masters.

<sup>b</sup> Pigafet, lib. ii. cap. 7.



The founder of this vast monarchy, was named Luqueni; his father Eminia-n-Zima was a petty prince, whose small territory was situate on the banks of the Zair, in the province of Corimba; and his mother, named Luqueni-Lua-Sanze, was the daughter of another petty lord in the same neighbourhood. Eminia-n-Zima, after this alliance, began to be weary of seeing so many equals around him, and to listen to the dictates of his ambitious spirit; being now quite dissatisfied with the small extent of his dominions, he resolved to subdue those of his neighbours, who lived in a state of independency, and composed a number of small republics, no less jealous of their liberties than he was eager to invade them. He met, accordingly, with a brave and strenuous opposition from them, which lasted a considerable number of years, but which his valour and good fortune at length so far overcame, that he made himself master of a considerable spot of ground, so strong by nature, that it served him, from that time, for a safe retreat against the united forces of his opposers, it being very difficult of access, and very easy to defend; so that he could, with impunity, continue his inroads and ravages, and retire, upon all occasions, into his impregnable fortress, which was now become the repository of his arms and ill-gotten treasures.

*History of  
their  
founder.*

*Luqueni's  
father in-  
vades his  
neighbours  
territories.*

This place, to which he took care to add several stout fortifications for its defence, was situate on the banks of the Zair, and, by its eminence, had an advantageous command over that famous river, enabled him to lay several sorts of duties and customs on all the trading vessels that sailed up or down, by which he soon became opulent and powerful enough to make it the place of his residence, and a considerable mart for commerce. This was the first rise of the ambitious Eminia-n-Zima, which was quickly after followed by an accident, which enabled his son Luqueni to lay the foundation for a much more extensive dominion.

*subdues  
them, and  
fortifies  
himself on  
a rock.*

His father had left the youth to take care of the fort, whilst he himself went upon some new expedition, when his own aunt, then big with child, happened to pass by the place, on board a vessel, from whom the young nephew made no scruple to exact the same duties that were required of all other passengers. She, as his father's sister, in vain pleaded an exemption; and upbraided him with his ambition and avarice; the rash youth, without any regard to her pregnancy, or the relation she bore to him, at one stroke ripped her belly open, and murdered

*Luqueni  
kills his  
own aunt.*



*Is rescued  
from his  
father's re-  
sentment.*

both her and the child. His father, being apprised of this unnatural action, was highly exasperated, and would have inflicted some severe punishment upon him for it, had not some of his men interposed, under pretence that there was something martial and heroic in the action, and rescued him out of his hands. They quickly after ranged themselves under his standard, and proclaimed him their chief, under the title of king, a title which his father had not yet dared to assume. Luqueni, elated with his new dignity, and the increase of his army, carried all before him. He subdued the whole province of Npembacassi, since called Kongo, and proved so successful in all his enterprizes, that he enlarged his conquests from the mouth of the Zair to the city of St. Salvador, that is above one hundred and eighty miles, almost without opposition; the prince to whom all that large tract belonged having been defeated in one of the first actions, and forced to wander as an exile to the day of his death.

*The heirs  
protest  
against him  
in vain.*

This unhappy prince, who was called Mabambolo, and styled Mani Pangala, or *King of Pangala*, left some sons behind him, who having recourse to the clemency of the conqueror, obtained the investiture of some inferior lordships, as fiefs from him, on condition they should acknowledge him their sovereign, and pay him a certain annual tribute. They, however, retained the title of Mani Pangala, and many of their successors have made fruitless efforts to recover their ancient dominions, but have been hitherto obliged to content themselves with their scanty allowance, and with making an open protest, from year to year, against the usurpation of Luqueni and his successors, to prevent their title from being proscribed (K). These protestations, however, do not excuse them from coming

(K) This is done by constantly sending a woman to court every year to order the king on the throne to retire to his own territories, and to resign a realm which doth not belong to him. He adds, that the king doth not fail of giving her a public audience; and having heard all that she hath to say, answers her in a polite manner, that it is God who

hath raised him to the throne, which he intends to transmit to his own successors; and that her masters ought to be contented with their lot, and live quietly under it, lest their attempting any innovation should bring a greater misfortune upon them. After which he makes her some considerable present, and also sends others by her to her masters (1).

(1) Labat. ex Cavaz. lib. ii. cap. 2. p. 347, & seq.

regularly to court, to pay their homage and tribute to the king; and, upon his demise, to receive a new investiture from his successor.

But to return to Luqueni: he no sooner saw himself firmly established on his throne than he began to make proper regulations, and to give his new subjects such laws as were most suitable to their genius, and most likely to secure his conquests. Among other public acts, he convened the chief officers of his dominions, among whom he distributed the government of his new conquered provinces, according to their respective merits, and the services they had done to him during the late wars; which so highly obliged them, that they strove, in gratitude to him, to add still fresh conquests, till they had reduced the kingdoms of Angola and Metamba under his obedience. Of all which vast dominions, his father Eminia-n-Zima, who lived to an extreme old age, saw him in quiet possession before his death; though whether he beheld his vast successes with pleasure, or inward jealousy, is hard to guess<sup>1</sup>. His successors have maintained themselves on the throne ever since; though, as we observed before, some of them have had the mortification to see a considerable number of provinces dismembered from it, besides that of Angola, of the best, if not the largest part of which, the Portuguese have made themselves masters; and that of Metamba, which was conquered from them much about the same time, by the queen Membacemba, as we shall shew more fully in the sequel of this section.

*He divides  
his new  
conquests.*

As for the lords or dukes of Batta, who still enjoy singular privileges in the kingdom, they are the descendants of Nsa-cu-claw, Luqueni's father-in-law; and it is likely that he bestowed that duchy upon them in fief, after his subduing it, as it lies within the course of his conquests. They were obliged to pay a kind of homage to the kings of Kongo, which consisted only in making their appearance at court at certain seasons, which they by degrees began to neglect, and contented themselves with sending a kind of embassy in their stead. But as those monarchs grew by degrees more powerful, they let those dukes know that they resented their neglect, and that they should quickly feel the effects of it, if they did not alter their behaviour; upon which they wisely resolved to comply with their duty, and to appear in person before them, and to acknowledge their dependence. The capital of their duchy

*Dukes of  
Batta  
whence de-  
scended.*

<sup>1</sup> Cavazzi ap. Labat, lib. ii. cap. 11. p. 344, & seq.

*The capital of their duchy.*

was called formerly Anghirima, or, according to Dapper, Anghirimba: at present it is called by the name of the duchy of Batta, or Bata, and stands about thirty leagues east of St. Salvador, and one hundred and fifty from the sea coast. It was once a pretty considerable city, but is much reduced since, though it is still the residence of the dukes and governors. The territory about it is very fertile, and the road which leads from it to St. Salvador, is interspersed all the way with pleasant villages and hamlets<sup>k</sup>.

This is the sum and substance of what could be learned concerning the foundation and history of this great monarchy, until the arrival of the Portuguese in these parts of Africa.

*Diego Cam first discovers the coast of Kongo.*

The design of king John of Portugal in making discoveries on the coasts of Ethiopia, was in order to facilitate, as he rightly judged it would, the discovering a way into India. It was therefore with this view, that he pitched upon the famed Diego Cam, one of the expertest sailors in his service, and a gentleman of the most enterprising genius, to be sent upon that expedition. Cam, upon his arrival near the Ethiopian coasts, fell insensibly upon the rapid stream of the river Zair above mentioned, as he was endeavouring to double the cape Catalina; and its vast breadth and depth quickly determined him to sail nearer, and to cast anchor at the mouth of it, not doubting but there must be inhabitants on both sides. He had not rowed far up before he saw a number of the natives, whose shape, complexion, and hair, greatly resembled the other Ethiopians, whom he had already seen; neither were they in the least alarmed at the appearance of these new comers, but came up to them in the gentlest manner, and presented them with some of their fruits and other refreshments, which Cam gratefully accepted, and requited by some equivalent presents. The misfortune was that they could not understand one another by any other way than by signs; so that it was not without some difficulty that he was apprised at last that they belonged to a very powerful prince, whose residence was a few days journey up the country<sup>l</sup>.

*Is well received by the natives.*

A.D. 1484.

Cam, delighted with their account and behaviour, and no less desirous to know who this powerful prince was,

<sup>k</sup> Dapper, Kongo, & al. *supra* citat. <sup>l</sup> John de Barros. Decad. Eman. de Faria, Decad. Jarric. Thesaur. vol. ii. cap. 2. p. 26, & seq. Osorio, [Hist. of Portugal, vol. i. lib. 3. Labat. Ethiop. Occid. lib. ii. cap. 12. Pigafet. lib. ii. cap. 2. & al. plur.

and,



and, if possible, to make some alliance with him, prevailed upon four or five of the natives, to conduct an equal number of his officers to St. Salvador. These were charged with considerable presents for the king and court, and were allowed a certain time for their return ; but the rapidity of the river, contrary winds, and other obstacles, joined to the length of the journey, prevented their being back so soon as he expected ; so that, after having tarried double the time assigned, he resolved to leave them behind, and to sail back for Portugal. Accordingly, taking with him four natives who were in his ship, and proved to be men of noble extract and excellent understanding, as hostages for his own countrymen, he weighed anchor, and sailed away. Some say they willingly offered themselves to accompany him into Portugal : however that be, it is certain he took great care of them all the voyage ; so that by the time of their arrival at the Portuguese court, they had made such surprising progress in learning that language, that they could inform his majesty of several important matters ; with which king John was so highly delighted, that having made them several very considerable presents, he ordered Cam to sail with them back to Kongo, and sent by him other very valuable presents and European rarities to their king and his court ; charging him, moreover, to exhort that monarch, in his name, to become a convert to the worship of the only true God, and to permit the Christian religion to be propagated through his dominions <sup>m</sup>.

*Sends some of his men to court.*

Cam, upon his return to Kongo in the following year, was greatly pleased to find his men in good health, and highly satisfied with the kind reception they had met with at court, as well as from the rest of the natives. It was not long before he sent a formal embassy to the king, accompanied with the rich presents from Portugal ; whilst the four young natives, no less charmed with all they had seen, and the noble treatment they had received in that country, expatiated both at their own court, and wherever they came, upon the magnificence of the Portuguese, monarch and nation. A firm alliance was quickly agreed on between the two crowns, which subsists to this day, though often suspended by intervening wars, of which we shall speak in the sequel.

A.D. 1485.

*Cam's return to Kongo.*

*Sends an embassy to court.*

Whilst this alliance was transacting at the Kongoese court, Cam set sail for the discovery of the Ethiopian and

<sup>m</sup> Ibid. *ibid.*

*Zachut sent  
ambassador  
to Portu-  
gal.*

African coasts, as far as the 22d degree north, and at his return, went to pay a grand visit to the king, who received him with all possible magnificence. At his request he gave him an ample account of the grandeur of king John's dominions, of the Portuguese laws, customs, and government, and more particularly of their religion; the result of which was, that that prince conceived the highest esteem and regard for the Portuguese, and an earnest desire of becoming a proselyte to their church. At his departure, the king appointed Zachut, one of the young nobles who had sailed with him into Portugal, to go now as his ambassador to that court, with orders to intreat his Portuguese majesty to send some holy men to instruct him and his subjects in the Christian faith; he likewise sent a number of other young Kongoese with him, to be educated in it, together with a large quantity of elephants teeth, carpets, and cloths made of the leaves of palm-trees, as presents to his Portuguese majesty. Cam departed soon after, and at his arrival at Lisbon, presented the Kongoese ambassador, and the other young gentlemen, to the king; who was highly satisfied with the success of that expedition, and gave those noble strangers a most gracious reception.

A.D. 1489.

*Zachut's  
reception  
at Lisbon.*

During the time they staid in Portugal, which was near three years, great care was taken that they should be instructed not only in the principles of Christianity, but in all such other polite exercises as were suitable to their rank; and, at length were baptized at Beja, to which place the court was retired on account of the plague which raged with uncommon fury in the city of Lisbon. The ceremony was performed with the utmost splendor and magnificence, king John himself vouchsafing to stand godfather to the ambassador Zachut, to whom he gave his own name. Not long after the solemnity was performed, he caused them to be conveyed into their own country, in three ships which he had ordered to be fitted for that purpose, the command of which was given to Gonzalez de Souza, a person descended from a noble family, with whom he sent likewise several priests, together with fonts, mitres, chalices, and other church vessels and ornaments of great value. The misfortune was that several of those who embarked with them from Lisbon, carried the dreadful contagion with them on board; many of whom died in their passage, and among them the commander Gonzalez de Souza, who was succeeded by Roderigo Souza, by the consent of all the officers.

They

*Souza's re-  
ception at  
Sogno.*

They all arrived safely, and landed at Sogno, on the river Zair, in the August following, and were joyfully received by the governor of the province, a prince of the royal blood, who had fixed his residence in that capital for the sake of carrying on a commerce with the Portuguese, and had been so well instructed by them in the Christian faith, that he was baptized by some of those holy men, soon after their arrival, by the name of Emanuel, which was that of the king of Portugal's brother. The ceremony was performed in the open country, in the presence of the Portuguese admiral, who had caused a sumptuous altar to be erected for the purpose; and where, after mass was ended, this noble profelyte, with one of his sons, and some of his officers, were received into the church before a vast concourse of the natives, who flocked thither on that occasion, and expressed their satisfaction by their joyful shouts. All this while the Portuguese, leaving the care of making converts to the monks and priests they had brought with them, were very busy in making new discoveries and settlements on the African coasts, and had by this time settled so considerable a commerce, as failed not to raise the jealousy of several European crowned heads <sup>a</sup>.

*Souza's  
reception at  
court.*

In the mean time admiral Souza, taking leave of his noble converts, hastened to Banza Kongo, where the court then was, and there gave the king an account of his uncle's conversion and baptism; with which he was so highly satisfied, that he enlarged his dominions, and gave him full power to pull down and destroy all the heathen temples, and other monuments of idolatry, within his government. His majesty was no less delighted with the commissions, holy vessels and ornaments, which he brought from Portugal; but he was still more charmed, when, at his request, they were brought to him, and exposed to the view of the whole court, amidst great crowds of his subjects, who all beheld them, we are told, with the deepest veneration, particularly the cross, before which the Portuguese falling upon their knees, the Kongoesse followed their example in their own way, and prostrated themselves before it. His majesty was very curious in observing every vessel and vestment, and uncommonly attentive to the explication which the priest gave him of every particular; the result of which was, that he immediately resolved upon building a sumptuous church in his capital, for the reception of these holy men and utensils. Though

<sup>a</sup> Oforio, Labat. & al. ubi supra.



*The king  
builds a  
sumptuous  
church.*

he was obliged to have the chief materials for it from some of the remotest parts of his kingdom, yet his zeal, and the great number of hands which he employed in that work, quickly completed the edifice according to his desire; some say it was finished in three months, and soon after consecrated, under the name of the church of the Holy Cross°.

*Is baptized  
in it with  
his queen.*

This solemnity was quickly succeeded by a greater; viz. the public baptism of the king and queen, and several of the nobility, with extraordinary magnificence, in his new church. The king took the name of John, and the queen that of Eleanora, in compliment to the king and queen of Portugal, and in the presence of their ambassador, who assisted at the ceremony as their representative. Their example was followed by many thousands of their subjects; and the king the more zealously encouraged them to it, as he was going at that juncture to suppress some rebellious subjects who were in arms in the province of Mucocco, and ravaging some of its best territories. Upon this occasion Souza, the Portuguese ambassador, presented him with a royal standard, on which the cross was embroidered, and, in his master's name, exhorted him to put his whole confidence in that divine Saviour, whose religion he had now embraced, and to rely solely on his assistance for the success of that expedition, to which he himself would accompany him with a hundred of his armed Portuguese. The king accordingly gained a complete victory over the rebels, and had the satisfaction to see his newly converted troops behave with an intrepid bravery which they had never shewn before. He was just upon the point of entering into their territories, with a full resolution to chastise those revolters with the utmost severity, according to the custom of the country, when Souza was so generous as to divert him from it, and, by his timely mediation, to prevent that province being ravaged with fire and sword.

A.D. 1491.

*Souza's re-  
turn to  
Portugal.*

Souza took leave soon after of that monarch, with great civilities on both sides, and left with him a great number of Dominicans, to carry on the affairs of religion, and to preach the Gospel to the people. About the same time the king's eldest son, who had been sent upon an expedition against some rebels in one of the southern provinces, when his father and mother were baptized, returned victorious to court. He was no sooner informed of their

conversion, and of the success which attended his father's arms, than he earnestly requested to be instructed and admitted to baptism; which being readily granted, he received the name of Alphonso, which was that of the eldest infant of Portugal. He continued a zealous proselyte to, *The king's eldest son baptized.* and great promoter of Christianity, during his whole life, and more especially after his accession to the crown; but his younger brother proved quite the reverse: his name was Panzo Aquitima, and his singular fondness for the heathenish superstitions in which he had been brought up, made him an irreconcilable enemy to the Christian religion, insomuch that he left no stone unturned to extirpate it out of the kingdom. What arguments he used to render the Portuguese and their religion suspected by his father, we can only guess; yet they were such as but too easily prevailed upon that weak prince not only to apostatize, but to persecute all the Christian converts that refused to follow his example. Among these, his eldest son, prince Alphonso, having resisted all his caresses and menaces, and endeavoured with all his might to defeat his brother's cabals, was accused by him of treasonable practices, and rashly condemned to banishment into some remote province, and his younger brother appointed his father's successor, who saw himself quickly surrounded by a numerous court, and at the head of a most powerful party.

His father having soon after detected his treachery against Alphonso, not only recalled this last from banishment, but gave him the government of one of the chief provinces of the kingdom, and at the same time ordered Panzo to return to court. Alphonso, with his usual zeal, began his government by forbidding all worship of idols, under the severest penalties; a step which not only drove a vast number of his new subjects over to his brother, now the declared patron of idolatry, but obliged his father to send orders to him, either to repeal the decree, or return to court. Alphonso excused himself from complying, and, at the same time, sent the king word, that he had then such a multitude of business upon his hands, that he could not possibly leave his government. *His law against idol worship.*

By this time the king, worn out with age, fatigues, and infirmities, was visibly hastening to his end. Alphonso was advised by his friends to march against his brother, and to seize upon the capital; an advice which he however declined till he was fully assured of his father's death; then he ventured to enter it in the night-time, by his mother's *A.D. 1491.*  
*The king dies, and Alphonso succeeds him.*

ther's direction. Next morning he appeared upon the spacious green before the royal palace, at the head of his friends and Christian forces; by whom, after a short speech, acquainting them with the king's death, and his being the next heir to the crown, he was proclaimed with the usual formalities, and loud acclamations. Panzo was at that time at the head of a numerous army, which, upon his receiving the news of his brother's being in possession of the throne, he divided into two columns, and marched directly against him. Alphonso, who had only a handful of Christian soldiers, and about thirty-seven Portuguese, expected him with undaunted courage, and both by his words and example inspired his men with such intrepidity, that they behaved with surprising valour, gained a complete victory, and drove the disconsolate Panzo, accompanied only by an old experienced officer, into a wood, where, in their flight, they both fell into a large pit, which had been dug to catch wild beasts. The prince died about two days after, partly by the hurt he got by the fall, and partly of grief and despair: whereupon the old officer sent a submissive message to the king, acquainting him that it was indifferent to him whether he obtained his pardon from him, or an order for his execution, such as his treason justly deserved; but begged, that if his majesty chose the latter he would permit him to be first admitted into the Christian church by baptism: he added, that as he could not but look upon his late victory over so superior an army as altogether miraculous, it was his earnest request that he might die a worshipper of that great God from whom they had obtained it<sup>p</sup>. Whether his behaviour was sincere, or mere artifice, the king was so highly pleased with it, that he freely pardoned and promoted him, and caused him to be instructed and admitted into the Christian faith. The rest of Panzo's army readily offered to submit to him; but he refused to admit them to take the oaths of fidelity to him, unless those who were idolaters consented to become converts, and those who had apostatized from the faith were regularly re-admitted into the bosom of the church.

*Defeats his brother.*

*Panzo's death.*

*Alphonso's zeal and generosity.*

This zealous resolution of the new king, reinforced by the good example he set before them, was quickly followed by the conversion and reduction of myriads of his other subjects; so that we may justly look upon his accession to the crown, as the æra of the re-establishment of Chri-

<sup>p</sup> Jarric, ubi supra. Oforio, vol. ii. lib. iii. & al. ubi supra.



stianity in his dominions. If we may believe Oforio, and other Portuguese writers, he, being no less excellent a preacher than he was a zealous king, was wont to make long discourses upon the truth and excellency of the gospel, the certainty of future rewards and punishments, and other such momentous topics as were most likely to confirm them in their belief and practice. But that which most effectually contributed to the success of the faith, next to his strict conformity with the Christian precepts, was the great regard he shewed to the Portuguese nation in general, and particularly to the Dominican monks, who had been sent thither by their monarch to convert his subjects. To the former he granted the extraordinary privilege of settling in what part of his kingdom they liked best, gave them considerable lands and immunities, and enacted severe penalties against such of his own subjects as should attempt to molest them in their new possessions. As for the Dominican friars, whom his father had so ungratefully and cruelly treated during the short time of his apostacy, and stripped of all the lands, houses, and slaves formerly granted to them for their maintenance, he took them more particularly under his protection, and not only restored to them all their old, but added sundry new grants, by way of compensation for the extreme disgrace and misery they had undergone. He built several new monasteries and churches for their use, in several parts of his kingdom, and omitted nothing that could render them respectable and beneficial to all his subjects. He even vouchsafed to learn the Portuguese tongue, that he might interpret to them the sermons of those preachers.

Emanuel being now on the Portuguese throne, and highly delighted with the progress which the Christian religion had made in the Kongoesse dominions, earnestly intreated Alphonso to send his eldest son to be educated in Portugal. Alphonso not only thankfully complied with his request, but sent with the young prince a number of other young noblemen to Lisbon, to reap the same benefit. Emanuel took upon him the charge of their education, and spared neither pains nor cost to procure them the ablest teachers. Some of those youths gave themselves up to the study of divinity, and made such progress in it, that, upon their return into their own country, they vastly increased the number of converts by their learned discourses and exemplary piety.

*Sends his son to be educated at Lisbon.*

*Emanuel  
sends a  
grand em-  
bassy to him.*

In the same year, Emanuel sent thither a splendid embassy, accompanied with magnificent presents, particularly a noble standard, with arms, which the king and his successors were afterwards to bear, richly embroidered upon it, with all their proper colours and ornaments. These were likewise attended with a most obliging letter, wherein Emanuel gave Alphonso the title of brother, highly applauded his zeal for the Christian faith, and earnestly exhorted him to persist in it, and in his friendship to the Portuguese nation. With all these requests Alphonso punctually complied, during the whole course of his reign; and such veneration had he for king Emanuel, that he used to say, he should never have any real pleasure in life, till he went to Portugal, and threw himself at his feet, to acknowledge all the obligations he had to him, particularly that of enjoying through his means the light of the gospel, worshipping the true God, and aspiring to eternal happiness. But that pleasure the state and circumstances of his kingdom would never permit him to enjoy; the fear of a relapse among his fickle and unsettled subjects, and the too small number of monks and priests that were left by this time in his vast dominions, many of whom had died through want and misery, or were withdrawn into the farthest provinces, made it appear dangerous to leave his dominions, till Christianity was better settled, and a more considerable number of preachers could be obtained from his good brother Emanuel. He therefore wrote very pressing to him for a fresh supply of them, and that good prince immediately ordered that his request should be granted with all possible speed.

*Fresh supply of missionaries.*

A new set of them was accordingly conveyed to him, consisting of five Dominicans, five Augustines, and five Capuchins, besides a good number of secular priests, all of them men of uncommon learning and piety, who, upon their arrival, met with a most affectionate reception, and were dispersed among the several unconverted provinces, where the Divine Providence blessed them with surprising success.

A. D 1521. Alphonso, who lived five years after their arrival, had the satisfaction to see the major part of his subjects confirmed in the Christian faith before he died. A little before his death he sent for his son Don Pedro, and in the most pressing terms exhorted him to use his utmost power to

*His character.*

preserve and protect the true religion, and to extirpate idolatry out of his dominions, as the most effectual means of procuring the divine protection on himself and his subjects'. He gave him his blessing with his last breath, and died universally lamented.

A.D. 1525.

*His death.*

He was succeeded, without any opposition, by his worthy son Don Pedro, the first of that name; a prince who not only possessed all his father's virtues, but strove to outshine him in his liberality, by the considerable augmentation he made to the revenues of the church, for the better maintenance of the missionaries and Portuguese who were settled in his dominions.

*Succeeded by his son Pedro.*

In was in the beginning of his reign that the pope granted unto the bishop of St. Thomas the spiritual jurisdiction of the whole kingdom of Kongo; in consequence of which he took upon himself the title of bishop of Kongo. It is hardly to be expressed what joy his arrival caused, not only at court, but in the whole kingdom, when he came to take possession of his new bishoprick. The king in particular distinguished himself in the magnificent reception he gave him; he caused the roads through which he was to pass from the sea-side to his cathedral, which is above a hundred and fifty miles, to be levelled, and covered with mats, the trees and hedges on each side to be trimmed, whilst the way was crowded all along with myriads of his subjects, who testified their joy and reverence by the humblest prostrations as he passed by, and by joyful acclamations as they followed his footsteps. Many of them presented him with sucking lambs, kids, or pigs; others with partridges, chickens, and other tame and wild fowl, and several sorts of venison. Multitudes of both sexes, and of all ages, came and entreated so earnestly to be baptized by him, that he was obliged to comply<sup>t</sup>.

*A bishop sent to Kongo.*

*Numbers baptized by him in the way.*

Upon his approaching the city of St. Salvador, he was met by the king and court, and the whole clergy, and conducted to the church of the Holy Cross, which he appointed from thenceforth to be his cathedral; after having performed divine service, he was thence conducted in the same splendid manner to a sumptuous apartment prepared for his reception. In a word, the good king spared neither pains nor cost to express his high regard to so worthy a prelate, and to engage him to make that capital the place of his chief residence. The bishop,

*Arrival at St. Salvador.*

<sup>t</sup> Pigafet. Jarric, Labat, & al.

<sup>t</sup> Pigafet. lib. ii. cap. 4.



on the other hand, to shew his gratitude to his majesty, and how worthy he was, both of the singular honours done to him, and of the new dignity he was now possessed of, immediately ordered the cathedral to be magnificently adorned, appointed twenty-eight prebendaries, some chaplains, singers, and other inferior officers. He presented it with a stately organ, altar-piece, and other costly ornaments, and with a handsome ring of bells, and with every thing that was requisite for the performance of divine service. His next care was to divide the city into parishes, to appoint proper pastors in each of them, and to regulate the several districts of the missionaries through the kingdom. He had several other designs of the like pious nature in view; but whether the air of St. Salvador disagreed with him, or the conduct of his prebends and priests displeased him, he made so many journies by water to and from the island of St. Thomas, that death put an end to all his religious prospects, to the inexpressible regret of the king and court, who had conceived extraordinary hopes from his learning, piety, and munificence. Before his death he expressed an earnest desire to be succeeded in his diocese by a hopeful prince of the royal blood, who had been educated in Portugal, and whom he had admitted into the priestly order, before his departure from thence. His choice was highly approved both by the king of Kongo and that of Portugal, who sent him immediately to Rome, where the pope, after due examination, having found him sufficiently qualified for that dignity, readily confirmed, and sent him home with his new title of bishop of Kongo, laden with considerable presents, blessings, and indulgencies. But he was unfortunately seized with a violent distemper in his passage to his diocese, which carried him off suddenly; by which accident that diocese continued vacant several years, as we shall shew in the sequel.

A.D. 1528.

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*His death.*

*A prince of  
the blood  
succeeds  
him.*

A.D. 1529.

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*Dies in the  
voyage.*

A.D. 1530.

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*The king  
dies.  
Succeeded  
by Don  
Francisco.*

A.D. 1532.

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*His death.*

His death was followed by that of the pious king Don Pedro, who dying without children, left the crown to his brother Don Francisco, a prince no less worthy of succeeding him, as possessing all his excellent qualities, and in particular his sincere and exemplary zeal for the Christian religion, a zeal the more commendable and requisite at this critical juncture, as the church was now destitute of a prelate, and the clergy were more solicitous about their own, than for the interest of Christianity. But he likewise enjoyed but a short reign of two years, before he left the crown

to

to a first cousin, named Diego, or James, and died highly regretted by all his good subjects.

Don Diego failed not to notify his accession to Don John III. now on the throne of Portugal, by a particular embassy, which had also directions to inform him of the state of Christianity, and to solicit a fresh supply of missionaries. King John, who inherited all the zeal of his predecessors, readily complied with his request; and, with a congratulatory embassy sent him a considerable number of Jesuits, whose order had been instituted about forty years before, by Ignatius Loyola, chiefly for the propagation of the gospel in foreign parts, and who voluntarily offered to go upon that mission, instead of the Dominicans, Capuchins, and other friars, who had been sent thither by his predecessors. These did not, however, arrive at Kongo, till a little before Don Diego's death, though he had been some years expecting them with no small impatience. All this while he was studying every method he could think of to oblige the Portuguese nation; he conformed to their manners and imitated them even in their luxury, affecting to have his palace adorned with all the sumptuous furniture he could procure from them, and to appear dressed in the richest apparel, which, after having worn once or twice, he liberally bestowed on some favourite courtier. During his reign, a new bishop, a Portuguese by nation, was sent to St. Salvador, where he met with a very gracious reception. The prebendaries and priests were the only persons who took a dislike to him, on account of his too strict morals, which were such a reproach on their scandalous lives, that they made no difficulty to disown his authority. The good king thought fit to interpose in behalf of the bishop, and sent some of the most unruly and debauched prisoners into Portugal, and others to the island of St. Thomas; whilst many privately conveyed themselves away with all their wealth<sup>u</sup>. Don Diego did not long survive this disaster; but, after a short reign of eight years, during which Christianity had made a more than ordinary progress through his dominions, died without children; a circumstance which proved the source of a long series of evils to the Kongose nation, but more especially to the Portuguese that were settled amongst them, in some of the best provinces of that kingdom.

*Is succeeded  
by Don  
Diego.  
His embassy  
to Portu-  
gal.*

A D. 1540.

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*A new bi-  
shop sent to  
him.*

*His Death.*

These were indeed no more than they justly deserved, as they were the prime cause and first promoters of all the

<sup>u</sup> Pigafet. lib. ii. cap. 4. & al. ubi supra.

*The Portuguese presume to thuse his successor; are all cut in pieces by the natives.*

troubles that ensued. They were by this time become so numerous and opulent, through the great privileges and immunities which had been granted under the three former reigns, that they took it into their heads to fill up the throne with a person of their own chusing, and to think themselves powerful enough to maintain him in it, as they knew him to be well affected to their nation, though he was not of the royal blood. This bold enterprize did not fail of alarming the court, and to stir up, in a little time, the whole kingdom against them. The princes of the blood, the governors of the principal provinces, and the rest of the Kongoesse nobility, justly looked upon it as an open and avowed attempt to subvert their constitution and government, and to reduce the whole nation to absolute slavery. They soon took arms against them, and the Portuguese put themselves in a posture of defence; but proving too weak to withstand the fury with which the Kongoesse attacked them, they were all massacred, without mercy or distinction. Only the clergy and missionaries were spared, out of regard to religion: they were allowed to enjoy all their revenues and privileges, and to pursue the concerns of their vocation with as much quiet and freedom as if no such disaster had happened \*. They used the same moderation towards the Portuguese that lived in other parts of the kingdom; for it doth not appear that this massacre extended farther than to those who were concerned in the conspiracy; though this bold attempt could not but render them suspected to the Kongoesse, and oblige them to keep a more watchful eye over their conduct.

*The clergy are spared.*

*Don Henriquez raised to the throne.*

As soon as this bloody execution was ended, which restored to the natives their freedom of electing their monarchs, the states assembled again, and raised Don Henriquez to the throne, without any opposition. Some authors tell us, that he was the real brother of the late king Diego, but had, for some secret reasons, been privately confined by him at a great distance from the court, and sequestered from public affairs, though a prince of great valour and excellent qualities. However that be, his reign proved short and troublesome. He was, soon after his election, obliged to engage in a dangerous war against the Anzichi, or, as others call them, Anzicans, a barbarous nation of canibals, mentioned in a former section, in which he was

*Dies in the war against the Anzichi.*

\* *Iid. ibid. Vide & Barros, Faria, Labat, & al. supra citat.*

defeated,



defeated, and died of grief, after a short reign of two years<sup>7</sup>.

He was succeeded by his son Alvarez, whom he had A.D. 1542.  
left regent during his absence, a wife and brave prince, a *Succeeded*  
zealous Christian, and every way worthy of a happier *by Don Al-*  
reign than fell to his lot. His first care, after his election, *varex.*  
was to send a solemn embassy to Don Sebastian, at that *His embassy*  
time king of Portugal, to excuse the late massacre of the *to Portu-*  
Portuguese, before his father's election. He recalled all *gal.*  
the Portuguese whom the war above mentioned had dis-  
persed into several parts of his kingdom, received them  
with the utmost kindness, and acknowledged them inno-  
cent of all that had been laid to their charge, with rela-  
tion to the late disasters, assuring them that he would  
quickly inform the king their master, and the bishop of  
St. Thomas, of it, by letters under his own hand. He  
concluded with giving them fresh assurances of his pro-  
tection and favour, and of his taking the most effectual  
means to dissipate all former animosities between his sub-  
jects and them, and earnestly recommend it to the priests  
and missionaries to use their utmost efforts to restore peace  
and a good understanding between them. He was as  
good as his word, and dispatched his ambassador with all  
speed, but gave him express charge to take the island of  
St. Thomas in his way, and deliver his letter to the bishop,  
intreating him in the most pressing terms to hasten over  
to Kongo, where nothing but his presence could put a  
stop to sundry enormous abuses, which had crept in among  
the clergy. This message made so deep an impression up-  
on the good prelate, that he presently set sail for St. Sa-  
lavador; but he was obliged soon after to return to that  
island, where a fit of sickness quickly ended his days, and  
left the kingdom of Kongo a third time destitute of a  
prelate.

To return to the Portuguese embassy. The person who  
was at the head of it, being a man of great penetration as  
well as intrepidity, instead of palliating the late conduct of  
the Portuguese in Kongo, made no scruple to expose it in  
its true colours, as an attempt to overturn their constitu-  
tion and government, seeing they could not pretend to  
raise a stranger to the crown, without the most manifest  
violation of their laws, and highest injustice to the princes  
of the blood, who laid claim to, and were then contend-  
ing for it; represented to his majesty how odious his

*The am-  
bassador  
accuses the  
Portuguese  
to Sebast-  
ian, and pa-  
cifies him  
for the late  
massacre.*

<sup>7</sup> Pigafet. & al. ubi supra.

subjects there, had made themselves to the natives, by their intolerable pride and avarice, and the tyranny they treated them with, in all the parts of the kingdom where they were settled : in a word, he gave so many instances of their misbehaviour, and supported them with such irrefragable evidence, that Don Sebastian, who was then on the eve of sending a powerful army thither, to revenge the slaughter of his subjects, was easily persuaded to listen to more amicable terms, and to live in peace and friendship with the new king and his subjects<sup>z</sup>. This happy reconciliation proved of singular benefit to the kingdom of Kongo, the greatest part of whose inhabitants must, some time after, have perished with extreme misery, had not king Sebastian sent orders to his subjects in those parts to behave with less pride and arrogance towards the natives, and to live in peace and friendship with them.

*A dreadful  
irruption of  
the Giagas.*

This storm was no sooner blown over, than king Alvarez saw himself and realm threatened with a fresh calamity. It was no less than an irruption of the Giagas, who invaded his dominions on all sides at once, before he had time to raise an army sufficient to put a stop to the horrid devastations they every where committed, putting all to fire and sword, without distinction or remorse. Seeing himself altogether unable to withstand such numerous forces, he was obliged to retire, with his court, to one of the islands in the Zair, where a grievous famine and pestilence, which closely followed them, destroyed a vast number of his men, and some of the chief officers of his court.

*The king  
retires to  
an island.*

*A grievous  
famine en-  
sues.*

As soon as the Giagas had retired, with all the plunder they could carry with them, the king returned to his capital, and caused all the houses, which those barbarians had burned, to be rebuilt. The natives, who had fled into the woods and inaccessible mountains, to avoid their fury, likewise returned to their habitations with the few goods they had saved, and began to till and sow their lands as usual; but, for want of magazines to supply their present distress, a grievous famine soon ensued, which carried off vast numbers. The next year proved still more terrible and afflicting, their hoped-for harvest being wholly devoured by the locusts, which covered the earth in such swarms, that they left not one blade of grass, nor grain of corn. The very leaves and barks of their palm and other trees were eaten up; a disaster which reduced

<sup>z</sup> Pigafet. Labat, Cavaz. & al.

them to such extremity, that the parents were forced to decimate their children, and to sell one of them to help to support the rest; insomuch, that the markets for slaves were so over-stocked, that the Portuguese merchants had not ships enough to transport them into the Brasil colonies.

What was still more shocking and deplorable, those famished wretches fell greedily upon any carcases they found rotting upon the ground, whether of man or beast, whether lately dead, or half corrupted, to satisfy their hunger; a practice which quickly occasioned a more dreadful pestilence than they had ever felt before. It broke out in loathsome blotches all over their bodies, that were more virulent and infectious than the worst small-pox, occasioned by the stinking and corrupt aliments above mentioned; insomuch, that the whole kingdom must have been depopulated in a short time, if the Portuguese had not come to their assistance, and furnished them with proper physic, and more wholesome food. Here it was that king Sebastian shewed himself truly generous, not only in the timely supplies of both, which he ordered to be conveyed to them, but in the orders he sent to his subjects to cultivate a greater extent of ground, in order to assist them with corn, and such other provisions as they stood in need of.

The reader may guess at the dreadful condition this miserable country was in, before the Portuguese came to their succour, when he is told by an eye-witness, that many persons of quality, and even princes of the blood, voluntarily sold themselves for slaves, and readily submitted to be sent chained among the common herd into their plantations, in hopes to meet with some relief, even in this sad exchange of misery. As for the unfortunate king Alvarez, he had scarcely begun to enjoy the satisfaction of seeing these calamities abate, when he was seized with a violent dropsey, occasioned by the badness of the provisions, and unwholesome air of the island, to which he had retired during the late famine and pestilence, of which he languished to the time of his death. He was likewise engaged in some other wars, both against the Giagas, and some of his rebellious subjects, in which he was greatly assisted by the Portuguese, under the command of Don Francisco de Govea. As soon as peace was restored in his dominions, he married the lady Catharina, by whom he had four daughters, besides two sons and a daughter, whom he had by a concubine; the eldest of which sons

*The dreadful state of the kingdom.*



succeeded him, according to the custom of the country, which makes no difference between bastards and legitimate children<sup>a</sup>.

During captain Govea's stay in Kongo, king Sebastian, having been informed that there were several rich mines of gold, silver, and other metals in that kingdom, sent some expert men thither, who had been formerly employed in those of Castile, to search for, and send him a true account of them: but king Alvarez had been dissuaded by his father confessor, Francisco Barbutto, a Portuguese, from suffering those mines to be discovered, lest it should tempt that monarch to make himself master of them, and by degrees of his whole realm; so that, instead of telling those artists where they lay, he sent them into some other provinces, where there were none to be found. This ill-timed policy, as Lopez styles it, cost him dear. King Sebastian and his Portuguese subjects, being disappointed of their high expectation, quickly altered their behaviour towards him, in such a manner, as left him no room to doubt what was the principal object of all their zeal: it was not long before he had the mortification to see the wealthy Portuguese merchants abandon his dominions, and the public commerce daily run into decay. On the other hand, his splendid embassies to the court of Lisbon were received with a formal coldness, and his most earnest and unwearied intreaties for a fresh supply of missionaries, to revive the spirit of religion, which was in a great measure extinct, were answered by affected promises and delays, without one single step being taken towards a performance. Christianity lost ground every day, whilst licentiousness and apostacy gained new proselytes and promoters.

*Religion  
and com-  
merce fall  
into decay.*

*A bishop  
sent to  
Kongo.*

About three years after, Don Antonio de gli Ova arrived from Lisbon, at St. Thomas, with the title of bishop of that island, and a commission to visit the kingdom of Kongo. Some quarrel which he had soon after with the governor, obliged him to cross over to the continent, where he met with a very rude repulse. The governor having represented him as a haughty turbulent person, an express was dispatched to him from court, to forbid him to set his foot in the kingdom: but, upon better information, the king not only invited him thither, but sent his son to conduct him to his capital, where he staid about eight months, and left two monks behind him, and de-

<sup>a</sup> Odoard Lopez, ap. Pigafet. ubi sup.

parted a little before king Sebastian failed for Africa, where he was afterwards overthrown.

By this time king Alvarez was become so sensible of the ill step he had taken in concealing the gold and silver mines from the Portuguese, that, upon the accession of Philip of Spain to the crown of Portugal, he sent him a letter by the same messenger who came to notify it to him, named Sebastian de Costa, wherein he offered that monarch to discover them to him, and sent him, at the same time, an account of several trials he had made of them. This offer, however, was on condition that that monarch should send him a new recruit of missionaries, for which he had so earnestly solicited king Sebastian to no purpose. De Costa did not live to deliver this letter to king Philip, the ship which carried him over being cast away on the coast of Portugal, and every person in it drowned. It was, however, found in a little casket which was thrown on shore by the waves, together with some other memorandums and directions with which the king of Kongo had charged De Costa, which were all carefully conveyed to the court of Madrid <sup>b</sup>.

*De Costa  
drowned.*

In the mean time king Alvarez, finding his distemper gaining daily upon him, and impatient to have his request granted by Philip, that he might have the satisfaction to see Christianity restored in his dominions before he died, dispatched Odoard Lopez, often quoted in this chapter, as the chief person from whose memoirs Pigafetta compiled his history of this kingdom, with fresh letters both to king Philip, and to the court of Rome, to treat with both courts about the discovery of the said mines, and a fresh supply of missionaries, and at the same time to give them a full account of the great decay and deplorable state of Christianity throughout his kingdom. Lopez, notwithstanding the king's eagerness for his departure, was detained eight whole months before he set sail, and then forced to embark in an old crazy ship, which leaked so much, that they were in continual danger of sinking. After weathering many storms and disasters, he arrived at the kingdom of Cumana, or, as it is since called, Granada, in a very shattered condition, and was obliged to stay there eighteen months before he could set out again for Spain <sup>c</sup>.

*Odoard  
Lopez sent  
ambassador  
to king Phi-  
lip.*

In the mean time, king Alvarez, still as impatient as he was unsuccessful, determined to try the fortune of a fresh

*Alvarez  
sends a  
fresh em-  
bassy.*

<sup>b</sup> Lopez, ap. Pigafet. ubi supra.

<sup>c</sup> Ibid. ubi sup. lib. ii. cap. 6.

embassy, and made choice of Don Pedro Antonio, the second person in his realm, to go on that expedition. He appointed one Gaspar Dias, a wealthy Portuguese, to accompany him, and to furnish him with what sums he should want to obtain a speedy compliance from either court. He gave them farther orders, that if they should chance to meet Lopez in their way, they should take him with them, and be directed by his advice. This last embassy had still worse luck than the former; their ship being taken by an Englishman, and wrecked upon the English coasts, where Don Pedro Antonio and his son were drowned. Don Gaspar had the good fortune to escape, and to get safe to the court of Spain, where he met with Lopez, who was but newly arrived, and just entering upon his embassy. Upon which he committed the whole conduct of it to him, and returned to Kongo to acquaint the king with the ill success of both embassies.

*Alvarez  
dies.*

By this time king Alvarez, worn out by his distemper, and so many mortifying disappointments, had departed this life, after a long, but thorny reign, of above forty years, and left the crown to his son Alvarez II. The news of his death soon reached the court of Madrid, where king Philip, now wholly intent upon the conquest of England, was glad to put off the negociation of the embassy to a more favourable time, and to advise the ambassador to go to Rome, and try his fortune with the pope. Lopez, accordingly, set out for that court, where he met at first with a very kind reception, and failed not to lay before his holiness the miserable state of Christianity through the whole Kongose dominions, in the strongest terms. He not only apprized him of the extreme want it laboured under of missionaries and other clergy, to attend on the service of religion, but added, that having gained great riches during his abode in that country, he had made a vow to found a seminary of priests in it, for the administration of the Christian sacraments, the instruction of the people, and the revival of the Christian religion, which was almost extinguished; to which end he begged of his holiness, that he would grant him his approbation, together with such indulgences, dispensations, and jubilees, as might best promote his pious views. The pope readily complied with his last request; but as to the main subject of the embassy, and the sending of a new supply of priests, he was pleased to refer it to the king of Spain, to whom, he said, it more properly belonged<sup>d</sup>.

<sup>d</sup> Lopez, ap. Pigafet. lib. ii. cap. 6.



The new king of Kongo, not at all discouraged by the ill success of his pious father, renewed the same requests from his accession to the crown. His first care was to send a most solemn embassy to Philip II. of Spain, in which, after having expatiated on the great services which his predecessors had received from the Portuguese monarchs, and the strict alliance which still subsisted between that crown and him, he intreated him to revive all the ancient treaties with him, procure to his dominion a new prelate from Rome, and send him a new set of missionaries, to repair the extraordinary losses which the Christian religion had sustained during so long a series of years. Philip, now more at leisure to listen to his ambassador, not only complied with all his requests, but obtained from the pope a peculiar bishop for the kingdom of Kongo, who was not long after conveyed thither on board a Portuguese vessel, accompanied by several eminent ecclesiastics, and a considerable number of missionaries, of different orders. These were dispersed over their several districts, and, by their indefatigable zeal, restored, in a great measure, the Christian religion to its ancient state, in a smaller number of years than could have been expected, considering the extreme decay, and the great difficulties they had to surmount.

*Alvarez succeeded by his son Alvarez II.*

By this time the far greater part of the nation, apprehending some fresh invasion from the barbarous Giagas, had left the plains, and were retired to their inaccessible mountains, with all their families and effects, and had lived in such a licentious and abandoned manner, that they were degenerated into mere savages: such were the people whom the missionaries were obliged to seek for among their rugged barren rocks, and afterwards to civilize, before they could make them converts to a religion, which was not only quite obliterated among them, but in all respects diametrically opposite to their bestial way of living. Providence, however, so far blessed their labours, that they gradually brought them away into their ancient habitations; where finding themselves secure from the inroads of the Giagas, by the various fortresses which the Portuguese had built upon their frontiers, they became by degrees more inclined to listen to their spiritual guides, and better disposed to receive the gospel. The benefit of their preaching did not confine itself to these numerous conversions which were every where made, but helped to suspend, if not wholly to suppress, the revolts which so frequently happened under almost every reign; so that

*Religion restored to its ancient state.*

*King Alvarez II. dies.*

Alvarez had the double satisfaction to see at once the surprising progress of Christianity, and to enjoy a peaceable reign during the space of twenty-seven years; after which he left the crown to Bernard, his eldest son<sup>c</sup>.

A.D. 1614.

*K. Bernard killed.*

Bernard, the first of that name, and eighth Christian king, had hardly reigned one year before he was killed, according to common report, by his next brother Alvarez, in a duel; or, according to others, assassinated by his or-

A.D. 1615.

*Alvarez III. ascends the throne.*

der. Alvarez was then duke of Bemba, and the eldest of all his other brothers; and, immediately upon Bernard's death, caused himself to be proclaimed king, under the name of Alvarez III<sup>f</sup>.

One of his first cares, after he mounted the throne, was to disculpate himself from having had any hand in the death of his brother. Among other public acts, he ordered a church to be built on the field of battle, and on the very spot on which he fell; and as soon as he was well of the wounds which he received in the fight, went himself to the stone quarry, attended with a numerous retinue: the more effectually to hasten the work, he took up a stone upon his shoulder, and carried it to the place where the church was to be built. His example was followed by his attendants, and next day by his queen, at the head of her court, attended by some of the Portuguese nobility. He likewise dispatched a sumptuous embassy to the court of Madrid, and another to pope Paul V. from whom he had received a fresh supply of Jesuit missionaries: but whether he had by that time taken any dislike to their society, or had conceived a higher opinion of the Capuchin order, his ambassador was particularly ordered to beg of that pontiff to favour him with a number of these last, and to bring them with him at his return.

*Sends a grand embassy to the pope.*

This embassy, at the head of which was one of the first nobles of the kingdom, attended by sixteen young persons of quality, met with a gracious reception from Paul V. who defrayed all their charges during their stay, and readily complied with all the king's requests.

*His ambassador dies.*

The change of air, diet, and way of living, joined to the fatigues of so long a voyage, and of attending the Romish court, threw the ambassador and most of his retinue into a severe fit of sickness, which carried him off in a little time, notwithstanding all the care and pains which the pope took to have him attended by the best physicians,

<sup>c</sup> Labat ex Cavaz, lib. ii. cap. 13. p. 402, & seq.  
<sup>f</sup> Vide Jar-  
ric, lib. ii. cap. 5. Labat, & al.

and plentifully supplied with proper restoratives. His death was attended with all the marks of a sincere Christian; and that pontiff, who had often visited him in person during his illness, caused him to be magnificently interred in the church of Santa Maria Maggiore. What the farther success of this embassy was, or the effect his holiness's regulations had upon the missionaries and clergy, we are not told, only in general we find Christianity making a considerable progress during the short reign of the then pious monarch, who died in the seventh year of it, greatly regretted both by his subjects, and by the Portuguese, who enjoyed very great privileges under him, as well as other strangers, who were settled in his dominions. He was, by all the accounts we have of him, a wise and generous prince, valiant and liberal, a zealous promoter of Christianity, and a most liberal benefactor and protector of those who propagated it, a great lover of his native subjects, and a singular friend and patron to strangers.

A. D 1622.

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*The king's death and character.*

He was succeeded by his son Don Pedro II. of that name, and tenth Christian king of Kongo, who reigned only two years, but in that time had an opportunity of giving one or two signal instances of his wisdom, moderation, and justice; one of them especially upon a critical juncture, which might else have been attended with some fatal consequences. The occasion was no less than an open rupture between his subjects and the Portuguese, the particulars of which our author doth not inform us farther of, than that both parties had taken up arms, and were come to blows, and that the latter had been defeated. Upon the first news of this commotion, the king's council, the nobles, and chief officers of his kingdom, without enquiring into the matter, unanimously expressed their resentment in the highest terms, and insisted upon his ordering them to be plundered, and banished out of his dominions without farther trial or delay. The king was the only person who declared himself against resolving upon any measures till a full and equitable enquiry had been made into the occasion of that hostile breach, and it was not long before he was fully convinced that his subjects were in the wrong, and had been the first aggressors. Upon which, though much against the liking of his court and council, he honourably acquitted the Portuguese, gave them fresh assurances of his favour and protection, and took the most equitable method to accommodate matters between them; so that he quickly compromised the

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*Succeeded by Don Pedro II.*


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*Friendship to the Portuguese.*

whole



whole affair with the Portuguese governor of St. Paul of Loanda, without the least derogation to his royal dignity<sup>g</sup>.

*A fresh  
instance of  
it.*

He gave, not long after, a fresh proof of his justice and friendship to the Portuguese nation on the following occasion. Five of their merchants settled at St. Salvador, as they were travelling through part of the frontiers of the kingdom of Micocco, laden with rich merchandize, fell into the hands of a troop of soldiers, or rather banditti, who stripped them of all they had, and brought them to that prince, who loaded them with fetters, and confined them in prison. The king of Kongo was no sooner informed of it, than he sent an express to reclaim them and their effects; and, upon his refusal, determined to declare war against him. Two great difficulties were started against it by the Portuguese general, who was to assist him in that enterprize, viz. the impossibility of transporting their troops into those remote parts time enough, and the danger lest the king of Micocco, a barbarous prince, should cause those merchants to be massacred in their prison out of revenge. Upon which they agreed upon redeeming them; but the friar, who was sent thither to treat about their ransom, dying in the way, they must in all probability have perished in their jail, had not a famine and pestilence which followed soon after, and was interpreted by that prince and his priests as a judgment for his injustice and cruelty to those strangers, determined him to set them at liberty. His fear, it seems, was such, that he not only caused the full value of all their effects to be restored, but ordered one of his officers to conduct them safe to St. Salvador, and to excuse his former conduct to the king of Kongo. As soon as the king was apprized of their arrival, he sent for the officer, and gave him a gracious reception, and sent him home laden with rich presents for his master.

*Dies lamented by  
all his subjects.*

Don Pedro did not live many months after this generous action, but died justly regretted by all his subjects, who had conceived the greatest hopes of him from those instances of wisdom and magnanimity. He had, it seems, proposed to himself the example of his predecessor and name-sake Don Pedro the First; and they were all in high expectation that he would have even outdone that great and noble monarch, when his unexpected death threw the whole realm into real mourning<sup>h</sup>.

<sup>g</sup> Cavaz. ap. Labat. lib. ii. cap. 13.  
ubi supra.

<sup>h</sup> Labat, Dapper, & al.

He was succeeded by Don Garzia, the first of that name; but whether his son, or a near relation, our author doth not inform us: there is, however, no room to doubt his being a prince of the blood royal, because none but such, as we have shewn before, are ever allowed to ascend the throne. He was, moreover, an excellent prince, and highly esteemed by his subjects; but his reign proved as short as that of his predecessor, and he died about the latter end of June in the second year of his reign.

A.D. 1624.

*Don Gar-  
zia, his  
short reign.*

His successor, named Don Ambrosio, the twelfth Christian king, was no less excellent and pious a prince, and as much beloved by all good Christians as he was hated by the merchants, whose male practices he punished with great severity. We have no other particulars of his reign, except that it lasted only some months less than five years, he dying in the month of March.

A.D. 1626.

*Don Am-  
brosio.*

He was succeeded by Alvarez IV. of that name, the son of Alvarez III. of whom we read little else, but that he died in the month of February, in the fifth year of his reign.

A.D. 1631.

*Don Alva-  
rez IV.*

His successor, Alvarez V's reign, was as unfortunate as short; he being killed in the second battle which he fought against the duke of Bamba, six months after his accession to the crown. The occasion of this quarrel was a secret but unjust suspicion he entertained of that duke, who was indeed very wealthy and powerful, but no less loyal. He had a brave brother named Garzia, marquis of Chouva, who was equally suspected by Alvarez; inso-much that his ill treatment of both obliged them to join forces in their own defence.

A.D. 1636.

*Alvarez  
V.*

They soon came to a decisive battle, in which they had the good fortune to defeat the royal army, and took the king himself prisoner; but, contrary to the usual custom of those barbarous nations, who seldom fail of putting them to death, the brothers contented themselves with confining him in one of their palaces, where he was treated with as much respect as if he had been in his own, they themselves attending, and serving him upon their knees, and giving him daily fresh assurances of their inviolable fidelity; none of which, however, could gain credit with that mistrustful prince. At length, to his great surprise, they resolved to give him such a proof of it, as they doubted not would at once rid him of all his fears; which was to restore him to his throne, and to carry him in his hammock upon their shoulders into his own capital, at-  
tended

tended with a numerous escort, royal music, guards, and other marks of royalty.

The ungrateful monarch, however, instead of becoming more flexible by this singular mark of respect and loyalty, grew the more incensed against them; and looking upon it as a disgrace to owe his life to his subjects, was no sooner restored to his throne than he began to levy new forces, marched directly against them, and attacked them with the greatest fury. The fight was long and bloody; but at length his forces were totally overthrown, and a vast number slain. The king's body being found dead among them, the duke ordered his head to be cut off, and carried in triumph, on a lance, to the capital, where the states of the kingdom being soon after convened, the duke being unanimously chosen and proclaimed king, and crowned with the usual solemnities, amidst the universal acclamations of the people, took the name of the deceased<sup>1</sup>.

*Alvarez  
VI. chosen  
king.*

*His zeal  
for Chri-  
stianity.*

*Is murder-  
ed by his  
brother.*

*A.D. 1641.*

*Don Gar-  
zia.*

*Garzia II.  
pretends;  
great zeal  
for Chri-  
stianity.*

Alvarez, now the VIth of that name, and fourteenth Christian king of Kongo, proved a wise and pious prince. His first care, after his accession to the throne, was to send a magnificent embassy of homage to pope Urban the VIIIth, and to entreat that pontiff to send him a fresh supply of missionaries to retrieve the decay of Christianity. He seemed wholly bent upon restoring it to its pristine flourishing state, when he was unfortunately murdered by his own brother, Don Garzia, above mentioned; who became no less odious to his new subjects by that black action, than he did by his other cruelties and tyranny, and more particularly by the method he took to force the states of the realm to elect him to the crown. As he had murdered the noble Alvarez with no other view but to ascend the throne, so he had taken care to appear at the head of such a numerous force before the electors, as should at once suppress all reproaches on account of that enormous and unnatural crime, as well as all opposition to his election; so that no one daring to utter a harsh word or complaint against him, they found themselves obliged to declare him successor to his deceased brother. We do not find that he changed his name like his predecessors, at least he is only known in the list of Christian kings by that of Garzia II. However, in the beginning of his reign, he made a great shew of imitating their zeal and piety, by the pains he took to promote Christianity,

<sup>1</sup> Cavazzi ap. Labat. ubi supra, p. 411, & seq.



and to increase the number of converts among the idolaters. But more especially by his kind and generous reception of the Capuchin missionaries, whom his brother had obtained from pope Urban VIII. to whom he assigned convents and churches, and lands for their maintenance.

He did not, however, continue long in this good disposition, before his eager desire to secure the succession to the crown to his eldest son, made him alter his conduct, and degenerate into a downright tyrant. He began with persecuting all the princes of the blood, who could lay the least claim to the throne, and putting them to the most cruel deaths; neither did he cease this bloody conduct, till he had cut off every one of them that could give him the least umbrage, excepting some few who had the good fortune to escape into the kingdom of Angola, where the Portuguese governor readily took them under his protection. These horrid cruelties, which but too openly discovered his ambitious views, failed not to alarm the states of the kingdom; yet none of them had the courage to expostulate with him. The clergy, the missionaries, and particularly the lately arrived Capuchins, did indeed venture to represent to him, in the humblest terms, the guilt and danger of his proceedings; but the repulse they met with from him quickly cooled the zeal of the greatest part of them; and those who still persisted in condemning his conduct, became the objects of his hatred and resentment. Some of them were cruelly persecuted, and, with the utmost inhumanity, left to rot in loathsome jails, laden with fetters, in the most extreme misery.

All these dreadful examples, which he clearly perceived rendered him more and more odious and detestable to his subjects, served only to alarm his fears the more, that they would put an invincible obstacle to his son's succession. This consideration obliged him to have recourse to more execrable measures, especially after a desperate fit of sickness had reduced him to the necessity, as he thought it, of recalling all the crew of pretended diviners, forcerers, and enchanters, whom his pious predecessors had banished out of their dominions to his assistance. These impostors finding at their arrival at court, that his eldest son, prince Alphonso, was of all his other children the most averse to their idolatries, quickly agreed to embrace that favourable opportunity of taking him off. For that purpose they persuaded the credulous prince that his sickness was occasioned by some charm or enchantment which that ambitious youth had made use of in order to open his way to the throne.

*Ill treatment of the monks and clergy.*

*Consults the idolatrous magicians;*

*deprives  
his eldest  
son of the  
succession.*

*His death  
and lega-  
cies.*

A.D. 1663.

*Antonio I.  
proves a  
more bloo-  
dy tyrant.*

throne. Garzia, without giving himself leisure to hear what his son had to say in his own defence, convened the states of the kingdom, at least such as were nearest at hand, and in their presence declared the eldest prince, Alphonso, unworthy and incapable of succeeding him to the crown, on account of his unnatural parricide; and caused his next son, named Antony, to be elected and crowned king. He lived long enough after this to commit sundry other crimes, and acts of cruelty and tyranny; and did not end his detested reign till the twenty-first year of it, when he charged his successor, who inherited all his vices, with some other dreadful commissions to be executed after his death <sup>k</sup>.

Don Antonio, the first of that name, and seventeenth Christian king, if such a bloody tyrant can deserve so honourable a name, had no sooner performed the obsequies of his father, than he set about performing his dying commands. He began with his eldest brother Alphonso, whom he ordered to be cruelly butchered, and deprived of the benefit even of the meanest burial. He closely pursued his father's maxim in putting to death all the remaining princes of the blood who had not escaped into Angola, not even sparing his younger brethren, lest any of them should, with the assistance of his discontented subjects, attempt to dethrone him. Those nobles and officers of his kingdom, of whom he entertained the least suspicion of disrespect or disaffection, were sure to undergo the same fate; till the shedding of blood became as familiar a practice with him, as if he had been brought up among the worst of savages. He grew at length to such a height of cruelty, that he could hardly find servants or slaves to attend on him; all his subjects shunning him as a ravenous monster, and his very slaves chusing to fly into the thickest forests, upon the most frightful rocks and deserts, and at the hazard of being starved to death, or devoured by wild beasts, rather than be exposed to his more inhuman treatment.

He was, however, much affrighted at dreadful appearances in the air, which happened about that time, some threatening comets, and other phænomena of the like alarming nature, which continued visible for a considerable time: but especially a dreadful pestilence, which destroyed myriads of his subjects, so far terrified his superstitious mind, that he seemed to be deeply touched

<sup>k</sup> Cavazzi ap. Labat. lib. ii. c. 13. p. 414, & seq.

with remorse at the vast quantity of blood which he had unjustly shed. . But no sooner were those judgments removed, than he fell into other enormous impieties.

Being now no longer able to bear the opposition of a set of men who were become odious to him, he resolved to pull off the mask, and to declare himself an irreconcilable enemy not only to ecclesiastics, of all denominations, but to all the Portuguese in his dominions, whom he styled a set of beggarly indigents, who were forced by hunger and poverty to abandon their native country, and to seek for a livelihood among distant nations. These he not only threatened to exterminate, but, to shew that he was in earnest, made all the haste he could to raise all the forces of his kingdom, which, when brought together and mustered, amounted, as we are told, to nine hundred thousand men.

*Enmity to the church and the Portuguese;*

*raises a vast army against them.*

The Portuguese, well informed of his threats, and that those vast preparations were intended against them, had found out a specious pretence for being before-hand with him. They revived their former demands of liberty to find out the gold and silver mines, pursuant to the offer which king Alvarez had made of them to Philip King of Spain; and declared they were come to a resolution, to be no longer baffled with the delays of the Kongoesse court, but to go and seize upon them *vi & armis*. Under that pretext they had not only raised a sufficient force to make head against the monarch, but had already penetrated pretty far into his dominions before he had got his numerous army together.

He durst not depend so far upon that dastardly multitude, as to venture them against the known valour of the Portuguese, without previously consulting his idolatrous diviners and magicians about his success, and offering some sacrifices to render their pretended deities propitious. The answer he received from those juggling priests, was, that he should certainly enter in triumph into St. Paul de Loanda, which is the metropolis of Angola, belonging to the Portuguese; and that the prime officers of that nation should carry him thither upon their shoulders. This assurance made so strong an impression on his mind, that he thought himself already victorious, and in possession of that important place, and all the Portuguese either dead at his feet, or laden with his chains; and, in this confidence, accelerated the march of his troops against them.

*He is deceived by his idolatrous priests.*

Both armies came soon after in sight of each other, and  
our



our good Capuchin assures us, that the divine providence so far interposed in favour of the Portuguese, as to send a miraculous rain of fire, driven by a hot scorching wind, full in the face of the enemy; which so grievously annoyed them, that great numbers dispersed and fled, whilst the Portuguese fell upon the rest, and made a most dreadful slaughter among them. The king, who had posted himself on a small eminence, to observe the fight, was soon after surrounded and slain; a circumstance, which being perceived by the remainder of his army, occasioned an universal flight; and the Portuguese, weary by this time of slaughter, neither offered to stop, or pursue them. They contented themselves with cutting off the impious king's head, and carrying it in triumph to their capital of Loanda, into which he had made indeed a solemn kind of entry, though very different from that which he had promised to himself, from the answer of his juggling priests.

*Defeated  
and slain.*

He had reigned about three years, when his defeat and death had put an end to that war, which seemed to threaten not only the total extirpation of the Portuguese nation, but of the Christian religion, out of his dominions. But the kingdom was not yet free from the danger of falling under the power of even a more impious and merciless tyrant: this was a prince of the blood, but one of the lowest class, whom the late king had spared, as appearing too despicable in his eye to be worth his notice. Taking advantage of the confusion that reigned every where, after the late bloody overthrow, and the king's death, he collected a sufficient force to enable him to seize upon the crown by violence, and caused himself to be proclaimed under the name of Alvarez VII.

*Don Antonio  
seizes  
upon the  
crown.*

He was a monster of impiety, cruelty, and lewdness, and no farther a Christian, than as he had been baptised in his infancy, but had neither been instructed in the principles of Christianity, nor ever made any profession of it. His reign was one continued series of the most horrid murders, extortions, and licentiousness of all kinds, till he became so odious to all his subjects, that they rose up in arms; and, with the assistance of the count of Sogno, drove him from thence, in the month of June of that year. The count immediately caused the states of the kingdom to be convened, and they made choice of another prince of the blood, about twenty years of age, who took upon him the name of Alvarez VIII. and was the nineteenth Christian king. He was a wise and promising prince, and might have made his subjects once more happy,

*Is succeeded  
by Al-  
varez  
VIII.*

happy, had he not found the kingdom distracted by factions, and miserably exhausted of all its wealth and strength by the dreadful wars and horrid butcheries of the two former reigns. These calamities furnished the then marquis of Pemba, a prince no less ambitious than powerful, an opportunity to revolt, and, in a little time, to wrench the crown from him, before he had enjoyed it four years. With this remarkable epocha our author concludes his history of the Kongoese monarchs<sup>1</sup>, since which we do not hear of any author who hath thought fit to continue it farther.

*who is de-  
throned by  
the duke of  
Pemba.*

○ 100 ○ 200 ○ 300 ○ 400 ○ 500 ○ 600 ○ 700 ○ 800 ○ 900 ○ 1000 ○ 1100 ○ 1200 ○ 1300 ○ 1400 ○ 1500 ○ 1600 ○ 1700 ○ 1800 ○ 1900 ○ 2000 ○

## C H A P. XLIX.

### *The History of the Kingdom of Angola, or Dongo.*

**H**AVING finished the history of the kingdom of Kongo Proper, we come now to speak of those other provinces which formerly made a part of that vast empire, and from subordinate lordships, or governments, erected themselves into considerable kingdoms, under their own monarchs, though in some respects still tributary to those of Kongo. In describing this we shall avoid as much possible repeating any thing which has been said in the last Chapter, concerning the Kongoese nation in general, with respect to their religion, government, commerce, produce, customs, and other such particulars, wherein they differ from each other only in very inconsiderable matters, which shall be specified. We observed that the two principal provinces which erected themselves into independent kingdoms, were Angola on the south, and Loango on the north. We shall now begin with the former, as the most considerable of the two, if not in extent, yet in wealth, commerce, fruitfulness, and other advantages.

*The king-  
dom of An-  
gola.*

<sup>1</sup> Cavaz. ib. vol. ii. p. 425, & seq.

## S E C T. I.

*The Situation, Extent, Limits, Climate, &c. of the Kingdom of Angola.**Its antient names.**Division of Angola.**Extent and limits.*

THIS country, which was antiently called Abonda, or Ambonda, afterwards Dongo, and by the Portuguese Angola, may be, for distinction sake, divided into Angola Proper, or that which was antiently a province of Kongo, and the kingdom of Angola, as it was afterwards enlarged by its new monarchs. In the first sense, it is confined between the two rivers of Danda, which parts it from that on the north, and that of Coanza, or as others write it, though more improperly, Quansa, on the south. In the second sense, that is with its additional conquests, it extends along the Ethiopic coasts, from the mouth of the Danda above-mentioned, situate in 8 deg. 10 min. S. latitude, to that called St. Francis, in 13 deg. 15 min. according to some; but according to the most accurate geographers, quite to Cape Negro, in 16 deg. 21 sec. According to this last extent the kingdom of Angola forms a coast of eight degrees and some minutes, that is, one hundred and sixty leagues, or four hundred and eighty miles, and upwards; but, with its windings, reckoned a great deal more; and the Cabo das Vaccas, or the Cape of Cows, which lies in 12 deg. 22 minutes, cuts it in the middle. What is its breadth from west to east, or its extent from the sea coast within land, is very different, and for the most part, unknown; but its greatest depth eastward is in the province of Angola Proper, which we are now to describe.

This part of the kingdom, and by far the most considerable, is situate, as hath already been observed, between the two great rivers of Danda on the north, which parts it on that side from Kongo Proper, and that of Coanza, which parts it from Cabezo on the south<sup>a</sup>. It hath on the east the kingdoms of Metamba and Higher Ganghela, and the ocean on the west. The whole country is very mountainous, there being but few plains to be met with, except on the maritime side, and between the ridges of the mountains.

<sup>a</sup> Linschot Kongo. Jarric, lib. ii. c. 6. Corneil. Davity. Dapper, Cavaz, ap. Labat, lib. i. c. 5. & al.



We have described the former of these rivers in the last chapter. The Coanza is large, deep, and rapid, and empties itself into the same ocean with the Danda, about the 9th deg. 20 seconds south latitude, and about twelve leagues south of Loanda San Paulo, capital of the kingdom. It is navigable about one hundred and fifty miles upwards, quite to Cambamba, where the Portuguese have a fortress and capitaneria, or settlement, under a governor, styled by them Captain. It abounds with variety of fish, forms several islands, and has some cataracts, one in particular, which bears its name. As for its source, and the length of ground it crosses from east to west before it comes to the Portuguese settlement, it is altogether unknown, as are the eastern countries which it waters, and the many rivers it receives in its course. Its mouth, between the capes Palmerino and Lego, is above a league wide. It hath a good depth all the way up to Cambamba, but afterwards is full of rocks and dreadful cascades, which render its course so swift, that there is no possibility of going higher. Its fall into the ocean is likewise so rapid, that the sea appears quite muddy two or three leagues below it. Its mouth is not easily perceived from the open sea, on account of an island quite covered with high trees, which lies just before it. About fifteen or sixteen leagues above, it divides its waters into two streams, of which the southern is the deepest and most frequented.

*Rivers.*  
*Coanza ;*  
*its mouth*  
*and cas-*  
*cades.*

The two chief islands formed by this river are Massander and Motchiamia: the former, which is six leagues long, and about two miles broad, is very fertile in maize or Turkey wheat, millet, and some other grain, which are reaped at three different seasons of the year. It produces likewise a vast quantity of manhioc, a root of which they make a coarse kind of meal, which serves instead of bread; and nourishes vast numbers of palm and other fruit trees. Motchiamia is about four or five miles long, and one in breadth, mostly plain, producing variety of roots and herbs, and breeds plenty of cattle. There were formerly five or six Portuguese families settled upon it, who carried on a considerable trade in slaves. Other rivers, which cross the kingdom of Angola, between the Danda and Coanza above mentioned, are the Beango or Zemza, which runs in the same westerly course, through the province of its name, of which we shall speak in the sequel, and empties itself into the same ocean; and some other small streams, of which we shall make mention hereafter<sup>b</sup>.

*Islands in*  
*it.*

<sup>b</sup> Cavaz. Dapper, & al. sup. citat.

Besides the provinces inclosed between these two rivers, there are several others included formerly within the boundaries of the Angolic kingdom, situated on the south of the Coanza above mentioned, and extending as far as the Lutano or Lutina, or, as the Portuguese have since named it, Rio San Francisco, which is another very considerable river, that disembogues itself into the same Ethiopic ocean, about the 13th degree of south latitude, or about three degrees and a half south of the Coanza. The inhabitants of these provinces, like the Giagas, formerly described, are little better than savages in human shape.

*The division of Angola into 17 provinces.*

*1st. Chissama.*

The kingdom of Angola is divided into seventeen provinces, among which that of Benguela still retains the title of kingdom, though in other respects reduced to a level with the rest. 1. The province of Chissama holds the first rank, and is situate under the 11th degree of south latitude, near the mouth of the Coanza. It is now become a Portuguese settlement; the people there pretended to some peculiar immunities and privileges above the rest, but the Portuguese governor and officers have thought fit to undeceive them of this fond conceit, by using them with the most tyrannic cruelty. Here are three commanderies, whose despotic governors behave more like bashaws than inferior officers over the natives.

*Produces a fine salt in great requisit.*

The soil abounds however with a peculiar salt, which the peasants make from a briny kind of water which they dig for, and, being congealed, they cast it into oblong square cakes like bricks, of about five or six inches in length; and those they exchange with the Portuguese for meal, oil, and other commodities. It is reckoned so excellent, not only for food but for physic, as being a pleasant diuretic, that the merchants convey it through all Ethiopia, and make an extraordinary gain of it. The province affords likewise fine honey and wax, but labours under an extreme scarcity of fresh water, because they have no rain from May to October, and their mountains are without springs; so that those who are near the Coanza are glad to fetch their water from that river, though at the hazard of being devoured by the wild beasts, which swarm along its banks.

*2d. Sumbi.*

2. The next province is that of Sumbi, situate under the same climate with the former. The natives are tall and strong, but, like the rest of the Ethiopians, so lazy and indolent, that, though their country is, for the most part, flat and well watered by the Rica, Caiba, Calacombola, and other smaller rivers, consequently very fit for breeding

ing vast herds of cattle of all kinds, as well as for sowing of grain; yet, partly through indolence, and partly through the vast numbers of wild beasts, which they neglect to destroy, they do not improve these advantages by a tenth part so much as they might, unless it be in some of the islands that lie at the mouth of the Calcombola, which are very rich, populous, and free from voracious beasts, and there they breed vast quantities of excellent cattle.

3. The third province is that of Benguela, which, as we hinted above, still retains the title of kingdom, and is permitted to enjoy some small privileges by its masters the Portuguese. The river Rimba, called also Cumani, borders it on the east, and the Coanza and Cubogi on the north, and its extent westward reaches quite to Cape Negro. It produces abundance of salt, though of an inferior nature to that lately spoken of, but which is yet in great request, and the merchants lade their vessels with it for exportation. The zimbis, *cockle-money*, formerly mentioned, are caught upon its coast, and pass in payment either by weight or measure. The country, which is mostly mountainous, swarms with wild beasts, particularly elephants, rhinoceroses, and wild mules; the flesh of the former is a dainty dish with the Negroes, especially after it begins to abound in worms. The lions, tygers, crocodiles, and other carnivorous kinds, destroy vast quantities of their cattle. They have but few flat lands, except towards the sea-side, where the Portuguese have erected a stout fortress, called Fort Benguela, in which they maintain a strong garrison, to keep the savage Giasas in awe, who had almost ruined the whole country, during the reigns of their ancient monarchs. But with all their care and power, they have not been able to restore it to its pristine state of plenty, when their fertile plains produced numberless herds of cattle, both small and great, which are now become very scarce. Nor hath their zeal been able as yet to wean the natives from their old idolatry; though our author tells us some of them in his time began to give a little more attention to the missionaries.

3d. Benguela, bearing the title of kingdom, its fall.

Zimbis, or shell money.

4. The province of Rimba, situate between Sumbi on the west, Lubolo on the north, Tamba on the east, and Scetta on the south, is divided into twenty lordships or districts, whose lords take care to entertain a good number of militia. It produces great store of grain, and abundance of fish. The inhabitants are mostly idolaters; but our author, who was there anno 1658, tells us, that he

4th. Rimba, and its 20 lordships.



found them very docile, and had the satisfaction to baptize a good number<sup>c</sup>.

5th. *Scetta.*  
*Its stupen-*  
*dous ridge*  
*of rocks.*

5. The province of Scetta, on the south of the former, and on the north of Benguela, is one of the most rocky and mountainous in all the kingdom, particularly on one side, where a ridge of perpendicular rocks covers a space of thirty miles in length, without interruption, and looks like a whole solid piece cut straight downwards, as if done by the plummet. The top of it however, dreadful as it looks, is both well inhabited and cultivated, enjoys a serene and wholesome air, and plenty of fresh water; which may well be looked upon as a wonder in such a burning climate as this, and yet is no more than is to be met with in several parts of the kingdom of Abyssinia. The low lands are likewise fertile, and well watered, and feed prodigious herds of cattle; which would still be more numerous, were it not for the wild beasts that devour them. The rivers and torrents, which come down from the hills, carry with them vast quantities of iron ore, which the inhabitants gather carefully, by laying straw and other such materials across the stream to receive it. Having laid it up in heaps, they convert it into metal by dint of fire, and it makes an excellent iron. There are found likewise in this country great quantities of a kind of transparent ore, pointed at one end, which they call taré, and believe to be engendered in the air, from whence it falls in thundering weather. In this province the residence of the governor is built on the declivity of a high mountain, called Lombo, on the frontiers between this and the province of Rimba, and he is so powerful that he hath twenty-two inferior governors under him.

6th. *High*  
*and Low*  
*Bembea.*

6. The province of Bembea, which is divided into Higher and Lower, extends on one side along the sea, and on the other divides the kingdom of Angola from the other foreign states on the south. The country is populous, and abounds with large and small cattle, with the fat of which the natives anoint their heads and bodies, and clothe themselves with the hides, coarsely dressed. They are addicted to the same idolatrous superstitions with other parts of the kingdom, but speak a quite different language. The great river Lutano, or San Francisco, waters and fertilizes most part of this province, but swarms with crocodiles, sea-horses, and monstrous serpents, which, besides destroying much of its fish, do a great deal of mischief to the adjacent grounds.

<sup>c</sup> Cavazzi ap. Labat, ubi supra, p. 68, & seq.

7. Temea

7. Temba is a flat low province, full of small rivers and rivulets. The Rio Longo, or Long River, springs there out of a rock, on which the Portuguese have built a fortress, which defends the whole district. Four other rivers fall into the Rio Longo, which swell it very much, and make it navigable a considerable way. The whole country abounds with wild cows and mules, which might be of great service, if the natives had the sense to tame them, instead of hunting them for food. It produces likewise some excellent roots, one in particular, much like parsnips, but a finer taste, said to purify the blood, and attenuate the phlegm. The province is divided into twelve lordships, whose chiefs, though under the protection of the Portuguese, yet live free and independent, and are only obliged to furnish them with a certain number of militia, in case of need. Though they often quarrel with each other, yet could they never be subdued by the Portuguese, but were as quickly reunited as they perceived themselves in any danger from that quarter<sup>d</sup>.

7th. Temba.  
Abounds  
with wild  
cattle, and  
wholesome  
roots.

8. Oacco, situate between the Coanza on the north-east, and Lubolo on the south-west, is beautifully variegated with hills and plains, without any of those high rocky mountains which cover some other provinces, well watered with rivers and springs of excellent water, and in a word, one of the most delightful provinces in that kingdom. The misfortune is, that the natives have not industry enough to cultivate it as it deserves; and what is still worse, the lords of it will not allow their subjects any greater quantity of land than what is barely sufficient for their families. The Congo, which falls into the Coanza, runs through the province, and renders it very fertile, but its fruits, we are told, are more insipid than in other provinces.

8th. Oacco.  
Abounds in  
springs,  
&c.

Quinzambabo, lord of this province, was baptized an. 1657, and persuaded a great number of his subjects to become Christians. He hath twenty funos, or governors, under him, whose principal business is to discipline and exercise the militia, in the use of all their martial weapons, and even in that of fire-arms. There is a distemper peculiar to this climate, which commonly begins with a violent head-ach and vertigo, and is followed by convulsions, which quickly reduce the patient to a mere skeleton. Their remedy against it is a plant not unlike our hyssop, which they pulverise, and drink the infusion of.

The lords  
it is bap-  
tized.

<sup>d</sup> Cavaz. ubi supra, p. 70.

They likewise extract an oil from it, with which the anoint the parts convulsed.

*Swelling in the neck.*

The natives of this province are likewise subject to a kind of terrible swelling, which begins at the mouth, and spreads itself all over the neck, which it often swells to the bigness of the head, causes excessive pains, and is often attended with suffocation.

*A venomous insect.*

Here is likewise an insect not unlike our horse-flies, whose sting is so dangerous, that if blood be not drawn very speedily, the person stung is immediately thrown into a burning fever, attended with excessive tortures, that commonly end in a total delirium, and, if not speedily relieved, in convulsive death. The natives use a remedy against it, which, though altogether superstitious (A), is yet so effectual, that the Europeans, unable to bear the excessive pain, will have recourse to it, in spite of the express prohibitions of the church. What is still more surprising, those who have been cured seldom fail of a relapse, occasioned by the bare remembrance, without being stung afresh; and some of them feel such excessive torture, that they have killed themselves to be rid of it.

*The sting how cured.*

*9th. Cabezo.*

9. The province of Cabezo joins to Oacco above mentioned on the north, to Lubolo on the south; hath the Coanza on the north-east, and Riniba on the south-west. It is populous, and well stored with cattle and other provisions, and hath a mine of iron on a mountain, called from hence The Iron Mountain, which yields great quantities of that metal, which the Portuguese have taught the natives to purify, and forge it into warlike and other useful tools. The Rio Longo, and other small rivulets and

*Its mineiron.*

c Labat ex Cavaz. *ibid.* p. 80, & seq.

(A) In this case, they have recourse to their conjuring priests, who seek out for an insect of the same kind, and put it into a hole which they have dug in the earth, adding sundry fumigations, exorcisms, and superstitions; after which they fill the hole with water, and replenish it as that sinks, stirring it, and letting the earth settle again several times. At

last, without staying till it is quite clear, and divested of its disagreeable earthy taste, they give the patient plenty of it to drink, which seldom fails of throwing him into a violent fit of vomiting, by which so great a part of the poison is thrown out, that his natural strength may easily get rid of the rest (1).

(1) Labat ex Cavaz. *lib. i. cap. 5. p. 81, & seq.*



Lakes, supply them with plenty of water. Their trees are vastly large, and they have one sort of them not unlike our apple-trees, the bark of which, being flathed with a knife, yields an odoriferous resin, of the colour and consistency of wax, and very medicinal, only of a little too hot a nature for our Europeans, unless qualified by some cooling drug. Malamba-Angy, the lord of this province, was baptized anno 1658, whose example excited many of his nobles and officers, and a great number of his subjects, to embrace the Christian faith. The avenue to his palace had, among other embellishments, twelve palm-trees, of such exquisite largeness and beauty, that the curious came far and near to see them; but they were originally brought hither from the adjacent province of Lubolo.

*Fine resin.*

*The lord of it baptized.*

10. Lubolo is situate along the southern banks of the Coanza, between the provinces of Cabezzo, last mentioned, on the east, and that of Quissama on the west. Some geographers include the ten provinces above described under the general name of Lubolo; nevertheless they most of them agree that this is the only district to which that name more properly belongs. It is much famed for its noble and excellent palm-trees, mentioned in the last article; and it seems as if its soil and climate were peculiarly adapted to them, so greatly doth the oil, wine, and other produce, which they yield, exceed all that is to be met with in the other parts of the kingdom<sup>f</sup>. The greater part of the people of this province are Christians, after the example of the chief lord, but not much to be depended upon for their zeal and constancy. They are tributary to the Portuguese, and their militia are at their command. All these ten provinces are on the south side of the Coanza; but as to their extent, limits, number of their governments, and other such particulars, authors differ so much from one another, that we dare not rely on any, much less attempt to direct our readers to which of them to give the preference.

*Lubolo.*

We come now to the seven provinces within the Coanza, the principal of which is Loanda, an island on the coast of the kingdom of Bengo, chiefly remarkable for the capital of Angola, called from it San Paulo de Loanda, built upon it by the Portuguese, anno 1578, under the direction of Paulo dias de Novais, the first governor of that nation in these parts. It is large and populous, pleasantly situate on the declivity of a hill near the sea-

*Loanda.*

*Its capital described.*

<sup>f</sup> Cavaz. ubi supra, p. 84, & seq.

*Its castle.*

coast, facing the south-west. It is not surrounded with walls, but only with churches and monasteries, which answer the same end. It is however defended by a stout and spacious fortress, which hath in it a church, dedicated to St. Amaro, and a convent of Cistercians, besides some few bulwarks, that serve to guard the entrance of the port. Near the fortress are the callimbos, or ditches, which are a kind of reservoirs of water, for the use of the Negro slaves belonging to the town.

*Convents.**Hospital,  
how maintained,*

The Jesuits, who are here held in great esteem, have their convent in the center of the city. It is a large stately edifice, endowed with a considerable revenue. On one side of it is the hospital called the Misericordia, which hath twenty-four rooms or wards, besides the apartments of the directors, physician, surgeon, apothecary, and other attendants. The revenue of this house consists in some portion of lands appropriated to it, and a tax of two rees payed by every vessel that comes into the port. On the other side of the Jesuits college is the church belonging to the fraternity of St. John the Baptist. The cathedral, which stands at a small distance from those three, is a large stately structure, dedicated to our Lady of the Conception, under which is another, dedicated to the Holy Sacrament. The Capuchins, Carmelites, and other friars, have likewise their monasteries and chapels, which, together with some other parochial churches, so surround the city, that they answer the end of walls and fortifications, for the safety of the inhabitants.

*Churches.**Their confidence in  
their saints.*

Yet the Portuguese place less confidence in these kinds of bulwarks than in the protection and prayers of those saints to whom they are dedicated; a circumstance which plainly appears from the exactness and magnificence with which they celebrate their festivals, sparing no cost nor profuseness upon those occasions, to express their high veneration for, and confidence in, those imaginary protectors; insomuch, that among the several fraternities of that city, which are composed of mere laics, merchants, and handicraftsmen, there are thirty thousand crowns spent every year on their anniversary festivals.

*Courts.*

This city is very populous, and much resorted to (B), as it is the residence of the Portuguese governor, or viceroy,

‡ De hac, vide Baudrand, Dapper, Labat, & al.

(B) Baudrand tells us, that, sand houses belonging to the Portuguese, all built of stone and mortar, and covered with tiles,

roy, of the bishop, and the chief courts of judicature, for the whole kingdom. The public buildings are sumptuous, as are those of the merchants, and officers both spiritual and temporal. The town is supplied with excellent fresh water from a curious spring in a neighbouring island; and the whole country round about is fertile, well cultivated, and delightfully variegated with villas, gardens, and stately fruit-trees, and other fine viscos, besides that of the open sea. On the north side of the city, at a small distance from it, is a hill somewhat higher than that on which this is built, and which still bears the name of San Paulo, and upon it are still to be seen some few houses, together with the ruins of a monastery formerly belonging to the Jesuits. As for the new city, it suffered very much when the Dutch took it, anno 1641; and, after the ensuing peace, the Portuguese in vain endeavoured to restore it to its former splendor<sup>b</sup>.

*How supplied with water.*

Its port is spacious, safe, and commodious, sheltered by the small island of Loanda, which lies opposite to it, at about half a mile distance. This island is about five leagues in length and one in breadth; and it is upon the coasts of it that they fish for the zimbis, or simbos, as the current coin in most parts of Western Ethiopia. This little island moreover supplied the capital above mentioned with excellent water. The Portuguese have built abundance of houses on this little island, and keep a great number of gardens upon it well cultivated and stored. They have likewise several handsome churches, and a convent of the Jesuits upon it; besides which they keep up a good number of lime-kilns, in which they burn oyster-shells, which make excellent lime.

*Port and island of Loanda.*

<sup>b</sup> Labat, & al. *ibid*.

tiles, and most of them very sumptuous and richly furnished. The streets are strait, wide, and regular, the convents and their chapels neat and decent, and suitable to their different orders. As for the houses of the native Negroes, though they are much more numerous, they are mostly mean and plain, built only

of earth, and thatched with straw. The town hath likewise a prodigious number of slaves employed in tilling the ground, carrying of burdens, and in other inferior offices; insomuch, that the Jesuits, who here officiate as parish priests, and preside over the schools, have no less than twelve thousand under them (1).

(1) Baudrand Dictionar. sub. voc. La Martiniere, & al.

The



*Vast numbers of slaves.*

The reader may guess by this article, what a number of slaves must be employed in supplying so populous a place with a sufficient quantity of that element only ; but the goodness of it makes amends for the trouble of carriage. The bread commonly eaten by the inhabitants, being made of meal of the root called manioc, brought hither originally by the Portuguese from the West Indies, is neither pleasant nor wholesome. They have plenty of good meat of all sorts, but their pork is reckoned excellent, at least by the Europeans ; for among the Angolans, dogs flesh is esteemed by far the daintiest meat, and as such they fatten and kill, and expose them at the public shambles. However, there are few Europeans that care to eat of it, any more than of their mutton, which is here of the large kind, with great tails.

*Fine seats about the city.*

The Portuguese have a great many noble seats and villas in the neighbourhood of this capital, richly furnished, and adorned with gardens, orchards, and other embellishments, and some of them with very handsome chapels, in which divine service is performed by priests, to whom they allow a sufficient salary for that purpose. About three miles from the city is the seat of an Angolan nobleman, in which are to be seen two very singular rarities : one is a fountain of sweet water, which issues at the bottom of a rock that is encompassed round with the sea ; in the other for above fifty yards around that fountain, there are found great quantities of serpents eyes and tongues petrified, like those that are dug up in several parts of the island of Malta, and which are said to have the same virtue : insomuch, that the Portuguese and other Europeans wear them chased in silver and gold, and export vast quantities of them. They use no coin in their traffic, but substitute instead of it the zimbis, or a kind of Venice bead, the largest of the size of a nut, but others smaller, and all of them of divers colours and fashions, on which account they also wear them for ornaments about their necks, arms, and wrists ; one they call anzolos, and the other mizangas. Greater payments are frequently made with pieces of cloth of their own manufacture, of a stated breadth and length, and the largest of all with slaves<sup>1</sup>.

*Traffic, how carried on.*

<sup>1</sup> Labat, ex Cavaz. lib. i. cap. 5. p. 90. Pigafet. lib. i. cap. 7. Baudrand, edit. 1705.

But it is time now to take a view of the six remaining provinces, on the north side of the Coanza. The first is Benga, or Bengo, situate along the river of its name, but more commonly known by that of Zenza: it has the sea on the west, and the province of Moseche on the east. The Portuguese have grubbed and cultivated vast tracts of land in it, which now abounds with maize or Turkey wheat, and maniock root, with which they make their bread. It produces also plenty of banana and bacova trees. The province is divided into a great number of districts, of which the chiefs are natives, though tributary to Portugal. They are all Christians, and have eight churches; three of which are styled parishes, and one belongs to the Jesuits, who officiate in it with great pomp on all festivals, and preach to the people.

13. On the north of Bengo is the province of Danda, *Danda* situated on the south of the river of that name, which divides Angola from the kingdom of Kongo. It is very well watered by that and others that fall into it, and is fertile in grain and fruits of all kinds, but is much infested with crocodiles, and monstrous serpents. The people are, for the most part, Christians, and have several churches, regularly served by secular priests, the most considerable of which is situated at the mouth of the Danda. About eighteen miles higher up is another, besides several chapels and oratories, which belong likewise to the Jesuits.

14. The province of Moseche, which extends along the northern banks of the Coanza, is very fertile, and sends no less than between three and four hundred thousand sacks of maniock meal to the city of Loanda yearly, for the use of the garrison. It hath two considerable fortresses, called Massangano and Cambamba, distant between six or seven leagues from each other, and each under its particular commander. Those two have twelve fovi, or native chiefs, under them, who are obliged to maintain a numerous militia for the defence of the kingdom, at their own charge, though chiefly for the service of their Portuguese masters. In this province are mines of several metals, particularly in the government of Cambamba.

The king of Portugal maintains a great number of churches and chapels in this province; the two most considerable of which are those of Massangana and Cambamba, which bear the title of royal chapels, and the priests which belong to them are endowed with considerable privileges.

*Fine zimbis  
used for  
ornament.*

vileges. The territory of Cubocco produces zimbis, or shell money, of such exquisite beauty, that the Kongoesse will give a slave for a collar of them; and persons of the highest rank, especially the ladies, look upon them as their principal ornament about their necks, arms, legs, and middle.

*Higher and  
Lower Il-  
lamba.*

15. The province of Illamba is divided into Higher and Lower, which are situate, the latter between the Danda on the north, and the Bengo on the south; and the former between the Bengo and the Calacata. They are both very fertile, and tributary to the Portuguese. Though the people in both are Christians, yet through the knavery or indolence of the officers, great numbers of idolatrous priests, and pretended conjurers, live unmolested among them. The Higher Illamba hath mines of excellent iron, and is covered almost all over with little hills, in the midst of which is a vast high mountain, from the summit and sides of which flow a prodigious number of springs and rivulets of fresh water, clear and light, and wholesome to drink, and communicate a most delightful coolness, verdure, and fertility to all that quarter. This province pays a considerable tribute to the king of Portugal, and is obliged to maintain a numerous militia for his service<sup>k</sup>.

*Mines of  
iron.*

*Oarii.*

16. The province of Oarii, situate on the northern bank of the Coanza, contiguous to that of Moseche, is well watered by a number of small rivers which, in the time of the great rains, become large, rapid, and dangerous. In this province is the libatto (C), called Maopongo, which was once the residence of the prince, whom the Portuguese permit to style himself still the king of Angola Oarii, though he enjoyed little else than an empty title, being tributary to Portugal, and having only a few sovi, or sovas, or *governors*, under him. This li-

*The an-  
cient royal  
residence of  
the kings of  
Angola.*

<sup>k</sup> Cavazzi ap. Labat. ubi sup. p. 95. Davity, Dapper, Pig. & al.

(C) A libatto, in the Angolic language, signifies a parcel of houses, or rather poor and low huts, built of earth, or mud, and thatched with straw or reeds, and surrounded with a thick thorn hedge, of a sufficient height to keep out the beasts of prey, with which

this kingdom swarms. This fence, which surrounds the whole hamlet, hath but one door, which is carefully fastened every night; without which precaution the inhabitants would be in danger of being all devoured by them in a very little time (1).

(1) Labat. ex. Cavaz. lib. i. cap. 5. p. 98. vide & Pigafet. Dapper, & al.

batto,



batto, which we may however style his metropolis, or legal residence, was situate on the top of a high rock, or mountain, of near thirty miles in circuit, of such a prodigious height, that its top seems to be above the clouds, and so rugged and steep, that it is accessible only on one side; so that he had little to fear from any enemy. The prince, however, kept a kind of mock court in this place; and, in imitation of the Kongoesse monarchs, breeds vast numbers of peacocks, a privilege which he reserved to himself; it being no less than capital, or, at least, loss of liberty, for a subject to do the like, or even to pluck a feather from one of these birds. This rocky situation of his dismal residence, as it is in other respects, hath, however, one considerable advantage, that it is surrounded with a spacious and fertile plain, watered by a vast quantity of springs and rivulets of excellent water<sup>1</sup>.

The Portuguese have since made themselves masters of it, in their war with Zingha, queen of Angola, and given it the name of the Stoney Fortrefs. They lost it not long after; but having recovered it a second time, have kept it ever since, as we shall see in the sequel. This stupendous group of rocks, which, at a distance, appears only as a huge city, surrounded with high walls, and variegated with steeples, turrets, pyramids, obelisks, triumphal arches, and other stately structures, at a nearer approach shews itself to be no other than a heap of stupendous rocks, parted from each other by intervals of a vast depth, several fathoms wide; and the summit of it appears to be a barren and uncultivated plain. Though it be near one hundred leagues from the sea, yet it abounds with variety of springs of brackish water, very proper to make salt of, and which, rising and falling with the tide, mount up at high-water, in large streams, sixty or seventy fathoms above the level of the plain. What adds to the wonder, these salt springs are mostly intermixed with a great quantity of excellent fresh water. About five or six miles from this place are still to be seen the sepulchres of the ancient monarchs of Kongo, called by the Portuguese Las Pubuillas de Cahazzo. They have two fortresses in this province, in each of which they keep a strong garrison; the one is built at Maopongo above mentioned, and the other at Quitongo, an island of great importance, on the Coanza. The natives are most of them Christians, remarkably zealous for the propagation of the gospel.

*Seized by  
the Portu-  
guese.*

*Springs of  
salt and  
fresh wa-  
ter.*

<sup>1</sup> Dapper, Angola, Labat, & al. ubi supra.

*Embacca.**Giagas  
brave sol-  
diers.**Provinces  
subject to  
Portugal.**The ancient  
and present  
govern-  
ment of it.**Tribute  
paid by the  
chiefs.*

17. The last province, called Embacca, or Membacca, is situate on the north side of the river Lucala, and between that and the Higher Illamba. It is wholly subject to the Portuguese; for the giaga calanda, who governs it under them, assumes a claim to a kind of independency; yet it is granted to him only on condition that he shall maintain, at his own charge, a numerous militia for their service; those troops, though idolaters, being more warlike, stout, and better disciplined, than any in the kingdom<sup>m</sup>. Thus much may suffice for the seventeen provinces which composed the ancient Angolic kingdom, before the Portuguese made themselves masters of the greatest part of them: we say the greatest part, because there are still some of them which neither pay tribute to, nor acknowledge any dependence on them, except when they stand in need of their assistance. Those that own a real subjection to the king of Portugal are the eleven following; namely, 1. Danda. 2. Moseche. 3. Bengo. 4. The Higher and Lower Illamba. 5. Oarii. 6. Embacca. 7. Benguela, in the capital of which the Portuguese have a large fortress, and maintain a garrison of about two hundred white men, and a much greater number of blacks, the whole under a capitano. 8. Scella. 9. Cabizzo. 10. Lubolo. And, 11. Oacco.

From the brief survey we have taken of the seventeen provinces of this kingdom, our readers will easily form a judgment of its government, religion, strength, wealth, and fruitfulness. We observed in the foregoing chapter that it was originally a part of that of Kongo, and was governed by a deputy under those monarchs; but those deputies, or governors, made themselves so free and independent, and so far enlarged their conquests, as to reduce all those provinces under their subjection, and to be powerful enough to oblige those princes to live in friendship with them, without paying them either tribute or allegiance. They sent their governors into every province, and obliged them to maintain a sufficient number of forces in each, to keep the ancient fovi, or *lords*, under tribute and subjection, and, on that condition, permitted them to live according to their old laws and form of government. These chiefs had a tribute imposed upon them by the governors, in proportion to the extent, wealth, fertility, and populousness of their respective districts; and provided they punctually discharged it, were permitted to

<sup>m</sup> Labat ex Cavazzi, lib. iv. cap. 3. p. 429, & seq.

exercise the same authority over their respective vassals, as they did before their reduction. Among that great variety of lordships which were in every province, some were hereditary, and others elective, and allowed to continue in statu quo, the subjects of the former were kept under better regulations, and stricter discipline; whereas those of the latter were headstrong and ungovernable, and scorned to submit, not only to the slightest punishments, but even to the justest and mildest reproofs of those who owed their rank and authority to their choice.

Such was the state of the Angolic government, and the power and authority of their monarchs, when the Portuguese first visited their country. They paid a kind of small tribute to those of Kongo, or, for the most part, rather interchanged amicable presents and embassies with them, without troubling themselves much about the right of sovereignty which they claimed over them; their subjects carried on a peaceable traffic with each other, and both monarchs were ready to send mutual assistance, upon all emergencies, whether it were against the inroads of an enemy, or to suppress a revolt in any of their provinces; so that, upon the whole, the Angolic kings were little inferior to those of Kongo, when they first admitted the Portuguese adventurers into their territories. How much these have abridged them of their wealth and power, as well as of their dominions, the reader may judge from what hath been said of the above mentioned provinces.

In the mean time it will not be amiss to say something of their commerce with the Europeans, and more particularly of that of slaves, in which it is so well known to have exceeded all other countries on the African coast, having furnished the American plantations with many millions, besides the myriads it constantly maintains at home.

It was this inhuman commerce that first invited the proud and lazy Portuguese and Spaniards hither, for hands to cultivate their lands in their American plantations; in which both the kings of Kongo and Angola, especially the latter, gave them such encouragement, that St. Paulo de Loanda became quickly the principal mart, and the Portuguese the chief merchants and brokers of that unnatural barter and traffick<sup>n</sup>. It was with the same view that the politic Hollanders wrenched that emporium out of their hands, though they were forced soon after to re-

*Amity and commerce between Kongo and Angola.*

*Their commerce for slaves.*

*The Portuguese the chief promoters of it.*

*Taken from them by the Dutch; who lose it again.*

<sup>n</sup> Pigafet. Barros, Faria, Dapper, & al.



linquish it to its old masters. It must be owned, however, that the Portuguese treated those slaves, which they thus bought and sold, whether from a principle of humanity or self-interest, we will not decide, with much greater care and tenderness than the Hollanders ever displayed. As the greater part of them were brought thither some hundreds of leagues by land, and suffered very much by the way, they never put them on ship-board, till they had rested themselves a considerable time in large houses, built for that purpose. There they supplied them with good food and physic, with palm-oil to anoint, and wine to cheer their hearts. If any of them were sick, they were kept in a separate chamber, and carefully attended; and if the transport ships were not ready to sail, they set those that were in health on some kind of work, such as grubbing and tilling fresh parcels of land, in planting, sowing, reaping, and other labour. During their voyage, they took care to provide them with a sufficient quantity of lemons, ceruse, and other drugs, to preserve them from, or cure their diseases, and particularly the dangerous one called *bittios decu*, which is very common in that kingdom (D); and seldom fails of seizing on those slaves that are brought thither for sale, especially if they stay any time in it before they are shipped off. On board, besides good wholesome food, they are allowed a fresh mat every ten days to lie upon, and room enough to rest easily. And it is for want of such precautions that the English and Dutch commonly lose such vast numbers of them before they can reach the American colonies.

*Commodities exchanged for them.*

The commodities which these dealers in human flesh exchange with the natives are broad-cloths, crimson and other coloured silks, velvet, cambrics and linen of all sorts, gold and silver lace, broad and narrow striped

(D) This is a kind of violent dysentery which often rages in this unhealthy country, and is very fatal to its inhabitants, as well as to strangers, who live among them. They call it *battio decu*, from the inflammation and violent pain it causes in the rectum, which is one of its first prognostics, accompanied

with a kind of deep melancholy, pain in the head and eyes, and, if not timely remedied by proper suppositories, made of lemon-peel, is quickly succeeded by a violent discharge of a greyish acrimonious matter, which excoriates the bowels, and causes the most exquisite pains (2).

(2) Dapper *Afric.* & al. *supra* citat.

tickings,

tickings, black ferges, Turkey carpets, threads of all sorts and colours, sewing silk, Canary and other wines, brandy and other spirituous liquors, oil, spices of all sorts, loaf sugar, knives, large fishing hooks, pins, needles, little bells, variety of other trinkets and baubles, glass beads, rings, fire-arms, swords, cutlasses, and other warlike weapons °.

We observed a little higher, that the Angolic monarchs obliged all the lords under their dominions to maintain a certain number of troops for the common service of the realm ; but our readers must not suppose them from thence to be worth much either for their discipline or bravery, their arms or accoutrements. They are even worse disciplined than those of the king of Kongo, who commonly musters them all, at least once a year, on the green before his palace, and sees them make some kind of exercise and evolutions, though they are such as would sooner excite laughter than terror in an enemy. Those of Angola, which are all infantry, are only a kind of national militia, in which every man that is able to bear arms is obliged to be inrolled ; and these seldom or never appear before their commanders, but when summoned upon any expedition, and where the best appearance they make consists chiefly in their prodigious multitude. Neither are those who are kept up for the Portuguese service in any respect better than the rest. So that, though their kings could heretofore, raise an army of a hundred thousand men, or even of three or four times that number, yet it would be no other than an unwieldy corps of arrant cowards, easily broken and discomfited by a few hundreds of regular troops.

*The martial discipline of the Angolans.*

Those over-grown armies are commonly at an engagement divided into three bodies, for the conveniency of the ground, as the general, who is always in the centre, thinks best. He likewise directs all their motions, when they engage, by the sound of several warlike instruments, which the reader will find described in the margin (E). They

*Way of fighting.*

move

• Pigafet. Dapper, Labat, & al.

(E) One of the loudest of them is not unlike the dull ill-contrived Kongoesse drum, with one skin, formerly described, but is beaten with ivory sticks, which make it give a greater,

and, if managed by a skilful hand, a more warlike sound.

The next resembles an inverted pyramid, with the point fixed on the ground, and consists of a certain quantity of

pieces

*Military  
dress, and  
weapons.*

move towards, retire or wheel about as those direct, and fall on with horrid shouts, and seeming great fury. But if any accident or panic once chance to disconcert them, neither the general nor all his warlike instruments, can rally them again, nor all the drums and cornets of Africa be sufficient to drown the hideous outcries of one of their flying hosts.

The military dress of the Angolic officers is much the same with that of the Kongoesse, only they endeavour to appear taller and more terrible, by the length and variety of ostrich, peacock, and other feathers, with which they embellish their caps. They fight naked down to the girdle, but hang about their necks several links of iron chain, to which are fastened some rings of the thickness of a man's little finger, which make a loud jingle at every motion they make, and, for the same end, they hang a parcel of bells about their middle, which they think inspires the foldiers with more ardour, and at the same time gives those commanders an air of pomp and grandeur. They wear buskins on their legs after the Portuguese

pieces of metal, thin and round like bells, turned upside down. This instrument is of such significance in an engagement, that the persons who touch it with wooden sticks often crack the metal by striving to make it give a louder and more dreadful sound.

The third fort is made of elephants teeth, and not unlike our German flutes, and of variety of sizes. This is much more musical and warlike than either of the other two, and gives a sound like that of the cornet, and with a greater variety of notes; for which reason it is supposed to have been at first brought in, or at least much improved, by the Portuguese, who have likewise introduced the use of drums, kettle-drums, trumpets, hautboys, and other European instruments, both in

war and in the churches. The kings likewise had them to play before them wherever they went, and the nobles entertained a number of them in their houses. But the three first forts are those which the natives chiefly use in their wars.

We observed above, that they were of different sizes, those of the largest are appropriated to the head general, whose orders are to be heard by the whole army; the next size is used by those who command the several bodies into which it is divided; and the inferior sizes are for the use of the colonels and captains; so that the sound of the large instrument is no sooner heard, than all the inferior ones answer in the same concert, and by this method the general's orders are communicated to the whole army (1).

(1) Jarric, lib. ii. cap. 6. Pigafet. Labat, &



manner. Their weapons are the bow, sword, target and dagger<sup>r</sup>. The common soldiery go naked from the waist upwards, and fight with bow and dagger. These are they which fall out promiscuously at first against the enemy to skirmish, before the battle begins. On such occasions they are animated by a number of attendants, who skip and leap about, ringing small bells. In other respects their way of fighting is much like that of the Kongoese.

*Way of engaging.*

The religion of this kingdom was over-run with the same deplorable idolatry and superstition as that of Kongo: but when this last had been in part converted by the missionaries whom the kings of Portugal had sent thither, the king of Angola, then in amity with Kongo, sent several pressing messages to desire him to spare some of those missionaries to come and preach the gospel in his dominions. The king of Kongo would, in all probability, have been glad to second so laudable a design, had it been in his power; but the misfortune was, that he had not a sufficient number of them to supply the tenth part of his own, the court of Portugal sending them to him but sparingly, and the greatest part of them dying after their arrival, through their fatigue and change of climate and diet. He was, therefore, obliged to excuse himself, and put off the complying with his request till the long-promised supply should arrive from Europe; an event which did not happen during either of their lives; so that the king and his subjects continued in their idolatry till the Portuguese had fixed themselves in several parts of the kingdom.

*The state of Christianity in Angola.*

It was then they began to solicit the courts of Rome and Madrid for fresh supplies of missionaries and other priests, over and above those they had brought with them, and that the prospect of so plentiful a harvest induced great numbers of all religious orders, especially Jesuits, to offer themselves volunteers to go and labour in this vineyard. Upon their arrival, they dispersed into the several provinces where the Portuguese were already settled, and thence went to preach to the idolatrous natives with such zeal and success, that between the years 1580 and 1590, they had made above twenty thousand converts. Since that time their number hath still increased, and the kings of Portugal, as well as the popes, have kept sending new missionaries, especially Capuchins; new churches have also been built in the several provinces subject to that crown, and are maintained out of the royal treasury. The gover-

*Angola  
erected into  
a bishop-  
rick.*

nors of those provinces oblige every sova, or *lord*, that is under him, to have a chapel and a chaplain in his lordship, to baptize and say mass. This kingdom hath been long since erected into a bishoprick, suffragan to that of St. Thomas. It may be from that see that the first missionaries were sent who brought the gospel into Angola, and began their preaching at San Paulo de Loanda above mentioned, which was by that time a considerable settlement of the Portuguese, and became soon after the metropolis of this kingdom.

What was the capital of the kingdom is hard to guess; Pigafetta, after Lopez, calls it Cabazzo, about one hundred and fifty miles from the sea. Jarric likewise calls it Cabazzo in one place; but in another tells us, that the royal residence was at Dongo, which last was the ancient name of the kingdom. On the other hand, neither father Cavazzi nor Labat mention any thing of the latter nor of the former as a capital, but only as a province of the kingdom<sup>9</sup>; nor do either of these authors take any notice of any royal residence except that on the huge rock of Maopongo.

*The lan-  
guage of  
Angola.*

The Angolic language is almost the same with the Kongose, and differs only from it in the terminations and pronunciation of the same original words, in the accent, and some few other accidental changes occasioned by the length of time and distance of places; which difference increases still more, as the provinces are more remote from the fountain head.

*Funeral  
obsequies.*

Some other customs they have in this kingdom which are peculiar to them, and which we shall just mention in a few words. In their funeral obsequies their first care is to wash and comb the deceased with great nicety; after which they deck them with collars and bracelets of glass beads of divers colours, and then wrap the body in a white sheet. The friends then carry it on a kind of bier upon their shoulders to the burying place, where they place it, in a sitting posture, on a seat of turf, raised for that purpose, in a vault arched over their heads. They then throw some of his household goods, weapons, and utensils into it, concluding the ceremony with killing some victims, the blood of which, together with the wine of their offerings, they pour plentifully upon the ground both above and below. This we suppose to be only practised among the idolaters, and those perhaps also that were

<sup>9</sup> Labat, lib. i. cap. 5. p. 82 & 97.

but half-christians, of which there are still vast numbers. As for those who are thoroughly converted, they bury their dead after the rites of the church of Rome. We are, moreover, told, that some of the idolatrous provinces are so savage still as to feed on human flesh, and prefer it to any other; insomuch, that a dead slave shall sell for more at the public market than a live one. These cannibals are, in all probability, of the barbarous race of the Giagas, by whom the far greater part of the eastern and southern provinces are still inhabited.

Nor are those who make profession of the Christian religion exempt from laws and customs, which, though of a different nature, are no less cruel and inhuman. The abominable commerce of slaves, which they drive on by myriads, seems wholly to have divested them of their humanity, and banished all social affection out of their families, parents readily selling their children, or even their wives, though pregnant, to purchase a Portuguese commodity, or even a gew-gaw; and, for a little wine or brandy, they will betray or kidnap their neighbours and relations, and sell them for slaves. The sovi, or sovas, or lords, will sell a vassal, and perhaps his whole family, in the same manner, for a small arrear or trespass; and as the Angolans are very quarrelsome and vindictive, they will frequently, out of spite or revenge, accuse one another falsely before the sova, merely to get their antagonist sold for a slave; whence it frequently happens, that the avaricious chief will find out some plausible pretence to condemn both the accuser and accused to the same punishment. It fares still worse with those provinces which are become tributary to the Portuguese, whom their greedy governors oppress with the utmost tyranny, not only in the heavy tribute they levy upon them, but much more in the barbarous punishments which they inflict on all delinquents, of what rank soever, not only confiscating all their effects, but even condemning whole noble families to be sold for slaves, for arrears or debts of little consequence.

The people of every province, or, as they are there called, mirindo, are divided into four different ranks. The first is that of the macotas, who are a kind of noblemen or gentlemen of the realm. The second consists of those who are styled the children of the mirindo, who are the original natives of the country, of either sex, whether

*The traffic of slaves the cause of much cruelty.*

*The Angolans divided into four ranks.*



merchants, artificers, or husbandmen, who are all esteemed free. The third is that of the quiscos, who are properly the slaves belonging to the mirindo, and are the property and inheritance of the lords of that province, which devolve, like all other real estates, to their heirs and successors. The last is that of the mabicas, who are the slaves, either taken in war, bought with money, or condemned to forfeit their freedom for some crime or misdemeanour.

Among the other inhuman customs of the Angolans, there is one which, though abolished among the Christian converts, is still but too much in vogue among the rest, and was formerly practised through the whole kingdom; we mean the butchering a vast number of human victims at the funeral obsequies of their relations, which is greater or smaller according to the rank or wealth of the deceased; and these carcases are piled on a heap over their tombs.

*Polygamy  
in great  
vogue a-  
mong them.*

There is still another particularity relating to the morals even of those who make open profession of Christianity; viz. their allowing themselves the same shameful plurality of women that the idolaters take, with this difference only, that the latter call them all wives alike, whilst the Christians give that title to the first, and that of concubines, or wives of the second rank, to the rest. In other cases they all live promiscuously within the same inclosure, neither do they abridge themselves in the number of them, unless they are confined in their circumstances\*.

The last particular we shall mention concerning this kingdom is their mountains, of which there is a remarkable ridge extending north-eastward from Cape Negro, some of which, on account of their vast height and coldness, are called by the Portuguese Monti Freddi, and some others, still higher, Monti Nevosi, by reason of their snowy tops, the waters of which falling in great plenty during the summer season, form a considerable lake below. Such snowy tops are justly looked upon as a great rarity in so burning a climate, especially as these last draw

*Cambamba  
silver  
mines.*

\* Cavazzi, & al. supra citat. † Pigafet, lib. i. cap. 7. Davity, & al.

u De Lisle, La Croix Relat. d'Afrique. & al.

## S E C T. II.

*The Origin and Foundation of the Kingdom of Angola, and History of its Monarchs; their Reduction by the Portuguese; particularly the Reign and surprising History of their Queen Zingha, or Xingha, and her long and bloody Wars against them.*

WE have already observed that this kingdom, or at least that part of it called Dongo, inclosed between the rivers Danda and Coanza, was subject to the kings of Kongo, and governed by a deputy or sova; but how long it had been so before the arrival of the Portuguese, would be labour lost to enquire, there being nothing satisfactory to be met with concerning their history before that epocha, their traditions being too fabulous and absurd to deserve the least attention. All that can be depended upon concerning the first of those deputies, or governors, who shook off the Kongoesse yoke, and erected this province of Dongo into an independent kingdom is, that he was called Ngola, or, as the Portuguese write it, Angola, who being an ambitious person, and became wealthy and powerful by the reduction of sundry neighbouring states, was easily induced, with the assistance, or, as others say, by the instigation of the Portuguese, with whom he entered into an alliance, to make himself independent, and to assume the title of Jneve, or *Great*<sup>w</sup>. Nevertheless, to prevent his being suspected by the king of Kongo, and bringing a war upon himself from that quarter, which might have disconcerted all his views, he chose to send him the usual tribute annually, accompanied with other presents, till he had settled himself sufficiently on his new throne, and had secured it to his descendants; by which time he was become so potent, that he looked upon himself as on a level with that monarch; then he made no scruple to take off the mask, and assume the royal title. What greatly facilitated his measures was the war which the king of Kongo had then upon his hands, not only against some revolted provinces, but against the barbarous Giagas, who had made a powerful inroad into his dominions, and against

*The foundation of the Angolic kingdom.*

*Ngola, governor of Dongo. shakes off the Kongoesse yoke.*

*Becomes powerful, and assists the king of Kongo.*

<sup>w</sup> Pigafet, lib. i. cap. 7. Jarric, vol. ii. cap. 6. Dapper, Davity, & al.

whom

whom he was glad to beg Ngola's assistance, not now as from his subject, but as from a friend and ally. Such they continued ever after, sending presents and assistance to each other, and encouraging a mutual commerce between their subjects.

*His reign.*

Ngola lived to a very great age, highly respected by his subjects, in friendship and alliance with the king of Kongo and the Portuguese; but in what year he began or ended his reign, no author hath been able as yet to inform us, the Angolans, and, in general, all the Ethiopians, being such bad chronologers for want of the use of letters, that, instead of aiming to preserve a table of years, they could only point out the epocha of any material transaction by saying that it happened in such a king's reign \*. This event, however, must have happened a considerable time after the discovery of this coast by Diego Cam, anno 1484, since the Portuguese were become powerful and numerous enough to assist the new monarch in his rebellion.

*Great number of wives.*

However that be, Ngola possessed a great number of wives and concubines, after the manner of the country, but had made one of them his chief queen, and gave her the title of erganna eniene, or the *great lady*, on account of her singular prudence and œconomy. He had three daughters by her, Zunda Riangola, Tumba Riangola, and a third, whose name is forgot, but she bore him no son; so that it became his chief care, towards the latter end of his life, to secure the succession to his eldest daughter. To that end he often consulted his beloved queen about the most proper means of effecting his design, which she failed not to encourage with all her power and eloquence.

Ngola being grown extremely old and infirm, agreed with her that he should send for his lieutenant-general, a favourite slave, whom he had gradually raised to that dignity for his signal services and good qualities, and had since created viceroy over his whole realm, to apprise him of his resolution. The artful minister failed not to approve and applaud it, though his chief design was to supplant the young princess, and to seize upon the throne. He took accordingly the opportunity one day, when that princess and the whole court were employed in sowing their lands, with the usual superstitious ceremonies, to spread a rumour, that some of their enemies had penetrated into the Angolic dominions. He took care to have

\* Labat ex Cavazzi in fin. lib. ii. p. 457.



the false alarm so well confirmed by several of his partisans, that it spread over the whole canton, and every one was consulting whither to flee for safety.

In this confusion the treacherous viceroy conducted the three princesses to the royal palace, and acquainted the king, who was then bed-ridden, with the pretended danger, and urged him to betake himself to a speedy flight. The frightened monarch, unable to stir, desired him to take some step for his safety; whereupon, being a stout young fellow, he took his royal master upon his shoulders, and conveyed him into a neighbouring wood, with the utmost speed and precipitation, under pretence of saving him from the fury of the enemy. But he no sooner was out of sight of those that accompanied him than he set him down, and plunged a dagger into his heart. This was the fatal end of the brave Ngola, whose treacherous murderer did not remain long undiscovered. Many of the nobles of the kingdom quickly appeared in arms against the traitor, but soon found his party too powerful to be opposed, and were at length obliged to submit, and suffer him to ascend the throne without any farther opposition, upon his publicly declaring that he had not seized upon it but with a design to secure it for the young princess Zunda Rianguola.

*The villain seizes the crown, and is the second king of Angola.*

In the mean time, as such a step was the farthest from his thoughts, and he had great cause to fear she would, sooner or later, find friends enough in the realm to force him out of it, as she was no less respected both on account of her father, and of her own amiable qualities, than he was detested for his horrid treason, he thought it his safest way to conciliate her favour. He tried to extenuate the heinousness of his crime, by representing to her, that what he had done was merely to free her aged father and herself from becoming a prey to the enemies of the state, who he knew were just ready to take advantage of the king's imbecility to cause a total subversion in the realm. He observed that though the method he had taken was indeed violent, yet it was the only way that could enable him to secure the crown to her, which was his whole and sole aim in all the steps he had taken, in order to set it more firmly upon her head, as soon as she should be of age sufficient to take the reins into her hands.

*Excuses his crime to the princess Zunda.*

The princess, young as she was, could easily see through the whole meaning of his artful and specious speech; but being taught to dissemble by her too just fears and imminent danger, seemed so wholly to acquiesce with all his measures,

*His sudden death.*

*Zunda  
Riangola  
crowned.*

*Groxus  
jealous of  
her sister.*

*Sends for  
her two  
sons.*

*Murders  
the eldest.*

measures, that nothing escaped from her that might alarm his jealousy. She assured him, that she wholly relied on his faithfulness and generosity, being fully satisfied that he could never forget that she was the daughter of a prince who had so affectionately loved and distinguished him. Several years elapsed without the performance of his promise on his part, or attempt on her's to dethrone him. At length a sudden death carried him off, opening to her a more easy way to the throne, and she was universally acknowledged and crowned queen of Angola. She behaved with such moderation and prudence, even in the first years of her reign, as gained her the admiration and affection of all her subjects.

But her repose was much disturbed in the sequel, through her giving way to her jealous temper. It was that which prevented her marrying, because she would not have any rival; and the same mistrust inspired her by degrees with a growing envy against her sister Munda, who had two sons by her husband, that were become the hopes of the realm, as being the presumptive heirs to the crown. Her apprehension that the subjects, grown weary of being governed by a woman, would set the crown upon one of their heads, gave her such continual disquiet, that she resolved to take them both off; but how to effect this barbarous purpose, was equally difficult and dangerous, whether by private means or by open force. She at length ordered them to be brought to court, under pretence of having them educated under her eye, as her children, and heirs to her crown. This pretence her sister and her husband Chilvagni Quisama, a wise and politic nobleman, judiciously declined for some time, under one pretence or other. At length the artful and mistrustful queen found means to prevail upon them to send their eldest son. He had scarce arrived at her court, when, like a second Megara, she caused the illustrious youth to be sacrificed to her jealousy, together with all the numerous attendants that had accompanied him thither, only one excepted, who, though covered with wounds, happily escaped, and brought the dreadful news to the princess and her husband.

The horror which seized the noble parents at this report was too excessive to suffer them to express their grief in helpless lamentations. They both sallied out of their palace, at the head of all their vassals, and made the utmost haste to surprise the bloody queen, whom they found ready to receive them, at the head of a numerous force; but

but her troops, at the first sight of the dead prince's parents, quickly abandoned her to their resentment. These did not suffer her to wait long for her just doom; the afflicted mother was the first that rushed upon her unnatural sister, and, having plunged her dagger in her heart, ordered her entrails to be taken out and flung into the hole into which she had caused her nephew's body to be cast. The deed was highly applauded by the Angolic states, who immediately conferred the crown upon her, and she would have associated her husband in the administration. Chilvagni, however, had his reasons for declining her generous offers, and, in the most affectionate terms, begged to be excused accepting them, to the great admiration of the whole court. At last the tender conflict between them was happily compromised by their mutual consent, to cause their surviving son to be immediately crowned, and to take the reins of government into his hands.

*Is herself  
murdered  
by her sister.*

*Tumba  
crowned,  
but resigns  
it to her  
second son.*

This young prince, who was named after his father Ngola Chilvagni, proved a warrior of the first rank, and quickly enlarged the Angolic dominions, by the conquest of several considerable provinces on the east and south frontiers. His fame gradually grew so great and dreaded, that powerful nations submitted to him even before his approach, and were proud to fight under his banners. He had a vast number of wives and concubines, and by them a great number of children, and dispersed his sons into sundry governments among his conquered provinces, where their descendants still make a considerable figure, and enjoy the many lordships and governments which he had distributed among them. He lived to a good old age, and died equally regretted and honoured. He was buried with great pomp amongst his ancestors, and succeeded by one of his younger sons, whom he had named his successor before his death.

*Angola  
Chilvagni  
crowned.*

Dambi Angola, that was the prince's name, had no sooner ascended the throne than the fear of his brethren uniting themselves against him in favour of the eldest, put him upon the inhuman, though but too frequent, expedient of putting them all to death. He could not, however, carry on his bloody design with such secrecy but two of them had some notice, or at least an apprehension of it, and happily escaped, one into the province of Lubolo, and

*Dambi  
Angola  
crowned.*



the other into some of the remotest parts of the kingdom of Metamba, which joins to that of Angola on the east. Dambi was indeed in his nature a monster of perfidy, cruelty, avarice, and lewdness; and it was no small happiness to his subjects that his reign proved but of short duration. His funeral obsequies were, however, performed with as great magnificence as if he had been one of the best and happiest of monarchs; and a mount was erected over his grave, which, according to the barbarous custom of the country, consisted of a prodigious number of human victims which had been sacrificed to his ghost.

*Ngola  
Chilvagni  
crowned.*

He was succeeded by Ngola Chilvagni, a warlike prince, but ambitious of glory, which he would purchase at any price. He made the most dreadful inroads into the frontiers of Kongo, along the rivers Danda, Lucalla, Zanda, and Coanza, whose waters were tinged with the blood of myriads, whom he massacred in his excursions. He carried his conquests within eight leagues of Loanda San Paulo, where he caused a tree to be planted, to be, as it were, a boundary of his ravages, near which, on the banks of the Coanza, the Portuguese afterwards erected a fortress, and called the tree above mentioned Ifanda, or Ifandaura.

Notwithstanding all those dreadful invasions and horrid butcheries, Ngola Chilvagni shewed such generosity towards all that readily submitted to him, as made him as much beloved by them as he was detested by those who had felt the effects of his cruelty, by which means he was sure to conquer, not only wherever he came, but even where he seemed to direct his forces; insomuch, that, whether through fear or hope, wherever he was apprehended to steer his course, they did not wait till he had entered their territories, but sent deputies to acknowledge him their sovereign, and to implore his favour. His surprising success, joined to the extravagant praises with which his parasites soothed him on every occasion, had at length such an effect upon him, that he began to fancy himself one of the deities of the country, and to exact the same honours as were paid to the rest. We are told that the sect of Singhillos, which is still extant, pretend that his soul, or ghost, is placed amongst their most considerable deities, and sends, or with-holds, the usual rains as he sees fit. He was, however, forced to submit to the common fate of other mortals, and, with the additional mortification of dying childless.

The

The states elected the young prince Ngingha Angola Chilombo Kiekafanda for his successor, great nephew to Ngola Chilvagni Quiafama, who proved a prince of such a cruel and tyrannic disposition, that, under pretence of justice, he indulged himself in the most barbarous severities towards his subjects. His extreme rigour on some of his revolted provinces, particularly that of Oarii, so alarmed not only his whole realm, but all the neighbouring states, that several of them submitted to him to avoid the effects of his cruelty. They were all, however, soon delivered from their fears; and death having put a speedy period to his reign, he was buried with the usual pomp and solemnities, particularly that of having a whole hetacomb of human victims slain and heaped upon his grave <sup>z</sup>.

*Ngingha Angola, a cruel prince.*

His successor, Bandi Angola, proved more cruel than his father, and carried his inhumanity so far, that he became odious to all his subjects. A general revolt ensued, in which they called some of the neighbouring Giagas from the south to their assistance. These, like a band of famished cannibals, hastened to them as to a delicious banquet, and besieged the tyrant upon an inaccessible mountain; where they resolved to reduce him by famine. In this emergency he applied to the king of Kongo for succour, whose interest it equally was to prevent these ravenous barbarians from entering the Angolic dominions, from which they could so easily pass into his own. That prince, therefore, hesitated not to send him speedy succour: casting his eyes on the Portuguese, whose valour he had so often experienced, and of whom he entertained a great number at his court, he ordered a strong reinforcement of them to march to his assistance. He gave the command of them, as well as of the Kongoesse forces, which he sent with them, to one of their bravest and most experienced officers, who, though vastly inferior in number to the revoltors and their auxiliaries, yet, depending on the bravery of his handful of Europeans more than on the Kongoesse under his command, attacked them with such irresistible fury, that he quickly routed them, and reduced the rebels to their obedience.

*Bandi Angola, a bloody tyrant.*

*The Portuguese defeat the rebels and Giagas.*

The king, seeing himself so happily delivered from his danger, and peace and tranquillity restored to his dominions, was so deeply affected with this signal service, as well as with the bravery and conduct of the Portuguese, that he took them into his service, and even into his coun-

*The Portuguese in great favour with the king.*

*The king grows jealous of them, and resolves to extirpate them.*

cil, and put such confidence in them, that he did nothing without their advice. Their brave general became one of his greatest favourites and confidants; but much more so of that prince's daughter, who shewed herself no less taken with his person than she had been with his valour and gallantry against her father's combined enemies. She had conceived a strong affection for him, and took all opportunities she could to make him sensible of it; but unfortunately for them both, she did it with so little precaution, that it was quickly perceived by the king, and awaked his jealousy to such a height, that he dreamed of nothing but of her going to throw herself into the arms of the brave stranger, and joining with him and his countrymen to drive him out of his dominions, and seize upon his crown and kingdom. He communicated his fears to some of his most trusty counsellors, who were but too ready to confirm him in his suspicions; so that, forgetting now all his obligations to those noble Portuguese, a bloody resolution was agreed on, at all events, to extirpate them all to the last man, as the surest way to prevent their dethroning him, and bringing his whole realm under a foreign yoke.

*They withdraw and retire to Kongo.*

These violent measures, however, could not be concerted with such secrecy but the princess got some information of them, which she imparted to the Portuguese general. This officer, seeing himself unable, with that handful of his countrymen, to make head against the whole force of the kingdom, thought it more expedient to retreat with as many of his countrymen as could conveniently join him, into the kingdom of Kongo, whither they arrived, all safe, in a short time, none of the Angolans daring to oppose or molest them through their whole march, though they followed them at a distance all the way. When the king of Kongo came to be informed of the perfidious and ungrateful behaviour of that of Angola, he expressed his resentment against him to the Portuguese officers in the strongest terms, and in all probability, would have taken some severe revenge, had he not been obliged to lead his forces, with all possible speed, to the assistance of one of his southern provinces, which was then invaded by some neighbouring prince, and forced him to suspend his resentment, lest that should induce the Angolic king to join forces with the enemy.

*Portuguese general sails for Lisbon.*

The Portuguese general desired the king of Kongo to permit him to sail into Portugal, whence he engaged to bring back with him such a powerful reinforcement, as should put him in a condition of revenging the affront offered



tered to him by that perfidious monarch; though at the bottom, his real aim was to give his master the king of Portugal a plausible handle for seizing on some of his Angolic provinces, by way of reprisal. But this he so artfully concealed from the Kongolese monarch, that he readily agreed to his proposal, and gave him leave to sail with all convenient speed.

Upon his arrival at Lisbon, he gave a full account to the king of what had been done at Angola, of the plan he had concerted for reducing the most considerable part of the kingdom, and of the specious pretence which the black treachery of that prince to him and his Portuguese would afford for invading his dominions. All which particulars were so well relished and approved by the king and council, that an armament was ordered to be fitted out with all speed, of which he was to have the chief command. A sufficient number of men were put on board, with the proper materials for building fortresses, garrisoning and providing them with all necessaries, offensive and defensive. The wind favouring him all the way back to Angola, he arrived safe with his squadron at Landá San Paulo, whence he immediately dispatched an express to give the king of Kongo notice of his arrival and success. The messenger was likewise charged to deliver the noble presents which he had brought him from the court of Lisbon, together with some others for his principal ministers, to a considerable value. These were no sooner gone, but the admiral sailed at the head of his squadron up the river Coanza, and, without meeting with the least opposition, landed his forces upon a convenient spot of ground, about two leagues off Massingano, a city situate on the banks of the Coanza, near the place where the Lucalla falls into it, and where they immediately set about erecting a fortress, for a place of safety, which they completed in a few days: it was, however, removed afterwards higher up the river, and had several new fortifications added to it, which brought it almost contiguous to the city of Massingano above mentioned.

It was not long before the Angolic king was informed of the Portuguese return, and of their fortifying themselves on so advantageous a ground. He made all the speed he could to get his forces together, and sent them against them. They came soon after to a fierce engagement; but his troops were soon routed and dispersed by the enemy's fire, a vast number of them were pursued and killed, and a much greater made prisoners, and sent

*Obtains an  
armament  
from his  
court.*

*Puts the  
country to  
the sword.*

into slavery. The admiral, following his blow, ravaged the whole country, and made himself master of every place and spot of ground which suited his convenience; but the king had the good luck to escape, and to avoid the dire effects of his resentment. But what they could not find an opportunity to execute, his more than ever exasperated subjects soon performed in favour of their revenge.

*Horrid extortions of the king's favourites.*

It is hardly to be doubted but after the defeat and dispersion which followed the late revolt, a prince of his cruel and vindictive temper treated them with greater rigour than ever. But what heightened their resentment even to despair, was the horrid extortion and barbarity, which he suffered the three brothers of one of his favourite concubines to commit every where, not only with impunity, but with such open audaciousness, as gave them cause to believe that he approved of, and upheld them in their tyranny. How far the Portuguese might have contributed in blowing the flame of sedition, at such a juncture, we can only guess; but it grew in a short time to such a height, that they came to a general resolution to assassinate him; and, in order to draw him out of his inaccessible retreat, where he wallowed in all manner of debaucheries, they bethought themselves of the following stratagem, which had the desired effect.

*His death resolved on.*

They sent deputies, to acquaint him with the revolt of Cuculo Cabazzo, who, at the head of a numerous band, committed the most cruel ravages, and to beseech his majesty to levy a sufficient number of his troops to suppress him, or else to give them leave to arm themselves against him. The king, highly pleased to find them so ready to take the trouble off his hands, readily granted them power to raise what forces they thought necessary, which they did accordingly, with all possible dispatch. Four days after they sent again to inform him that they had attacked the rebels, though they had not taken one step towards it, and that they had been repulsed with loss; but that, if his majesty would but condescend to animate them with his presence, the very sight of him would inspire them with such fresh courage, that he should soon see the revolted totally reduced, and himself crowned with victory.

The bait had the desired effect; and the king, without any other precaution or reliance than his own guards, set out a few days after to go and head his troops, which were encamped on the banks of the Lucalla. He no sooner

sooner came in sight of them than all the chief officers went forth to meet him, and, with seeming joy and emulation, to pay their respects to him, by which means they gradually parted him from his guards, till having surrounded him on every side, they at once fell upon and cut him in pieces. He left five children behind him, the one an infant by his favourite concubine Aongoa-ki-kilo, lately mentioned, and four others, a son and three daughters, by one of his slaves. The son of the former was judged incapable of succeeding him, because his mother had been found guilty of breach of fidelity; so that they could not be sure of his being really the king's son. The children of the slave were excluded, by the laws of the realm, from inheriting their father's throne, merely on account of their mother's being a slave, for otherwise, both the son, whose name was Ngola Mbandi, and his three sisters, Zingha, or, as others write it, Xinga, Bandi Angola, Cambi, and Fungi, had already displayed such amiable qualities, by their well-timed liberalities, that they had acquired the affection of the whole nation. It was by their means that the son gained such a powerful party on his side, as in some measure forced the electors to raise him to the throne, notwithstanding the slavish condition of his mother.

*Ngola  
Bandi  
chosen  
king.*

The crown was hardly well settled upon his head, before he began to wreak his resentment upon all that had opposed his election. The tendula, or commander of the king's rear-guard, who, by his office, is the chief of the electors, and the person who governs the realm during the interregnum, he ordered to be put to death with his whole family. These were followed by the principal officers of his father's court. All his concubines, together with their parents and near relations, he caused to be cruelly butchered, together with his half-brother, his father's son by a favourite concubine, then but an infant. He did not even spare his own nephew, the son of his sister Zingha-Bandi, whom she had by one of her paramours; at which outrage she was so highly exasperated, that she swore to be revenged on him in the same manner, as she actually was, not long after.

*Ngola  
Bandi  
crowned.*

The next objects of his hatred and jealousy were the Portuguese. These he so much dreaded on account of their valour and singular policy, that he resolved to declare war against them, and not to lay down his arms till he had exterminated or driven them out of his dominions. But he paid dear for his rashness; and the confidence he put in

*Defeated  
by the Por-  
tuguese.*



his myriads of undisciplined poltroons, against such experienced warriors. Notwithstanding their vast inferiority in numbers, they gained a most complete victory over him, and obliged him to save his life by flight, first into the island of Chiconda, in the river Coanza, and thence into one of the neighbouring deserts of Oacco, where, out of tenderness and compassion, they suffered him to live among the wild beasts, destitute of kingdom or subjects, or other sustenance than those wastes afforded him, without, however, losing one grain of his fierce hatred and thirst of blood. He had moreover the mortification to lose his queen and his two sisters, Cambi and Fungi, who were taken prisoners, and carried to Loanda San Paulo, where they were however honourably treated by the Portuguese viceroy. As for Zingha, she was not present at that engagement.

*His queen  
and sisters  
taken pri-  
oners.*

*Embassy to  
the viceroy.*

Being afterwards informed of the generous treatment these three princesses had met with, he resolved to send an embassy to that governor, to treat about their redemption, and an exchange of prisoners; which was readily concluded on both sides, and the princesses were sent back, laden with civilities and presents: but the treacherous king found means to evade the execution of his part of the contract, and, by that impolitic step, plunged himself into greater difficulties. At length a new viceroy arrived at Loanda, Don John de Correa de Sousa, a nobleman of great merit, but vain and ambitious of glory. Ngola Bandi, who by that time had got possession of the kingdom of Metamba, was in no small perplexity how to appease the new governor for the breach of articles which he never designed to execute.

*Sends his  
sister Zin-  
gha on an  
embassy to  
him.*

He had at length recourse to his exasperated sister Zingha. Having excused as well as he could the murder of her son, he proposed the sending her on a most splendid embassy to the viceroy, in order to procure a peace with him upon any terms; and added, that as her embracing the Portuguese religion might prove a means of facilitating her negotiations, he advised her to consent to it for the present, which would entitle her the more to their favour and confidence. The artful sister, without forgetting the revenge she had sworn against him, accepted the proposal, and was sent, with a magnificent retinue, as a plenipotentiary to the viceroy, who received her with all the honours due to her character, and lodged her in a splendid palace.

.At

At the first audience she was not a little surpris'd to find a stately elbow-chair prepared for Don John, and for her only a rich tapestry spread on the floor, with a velvet cushion embroidered with gold, and placed opposite the chair of state. She concealed her displeasure, however, with great presence of mind, and beckoning to one of the ladies of her retinue, she ordered her to lay herself down on the carpet, upon her elbows and knees, and sat herself on her back, during the whole time of the audience. She acquitted herself of her commission with such address and majesty, and palliated her brother's fault with so much nobleness, that she gained the admiration of the whole council. When they propos'd entering into a treaty of alliance offensive and defensive with her brother, upon condition that he should own himself a vassal, and pay a certain tribute to the king of Portugal, she as frankly told them that such conditions were indeed fit to be impos'd on those who had been conquered by the sword, but not on a powerful monarch, who only sought their friendship and alliance: upon which the treaty was concluded on both sides, without any other conditions than the exchange of prisoners. The audience being over, Don John took notice to her, as he was conducting her out of the hall, that the lady who had served her instead of a seat continued still in the same posture. She told him that it did not become the ambassadress of a great monarch to make use twice of the same chair, and so she looked upon her as a piece of cast-off goods not worth her notice.

The princess was so taken with the Portuguese politeness, with the honours done to her, and particularly with observing the order, dress, arms, exercise, and various evolutions of their troops, that it induced her to stay the longer at Loanda San Paulo; during which time she consented to be instructed in the principles of Christianity, and shew'd such a liking to them, whether real or out of policy, that she was baptized with great solemnity on that very year, which was the fortieth of her age. Don John and his spouse were her sponsors, who dismissed her soon after, with all possible honours, loaden with the richest presents, and highly satisfied with her reception and success. At her return she took care to have the articles ratified by her brother, who on his part express'd his approbation of them, and his great obligations to her in the most obliging terms. He went so far as to desire the viceroy to send some proper persons to instruct

*Her noble  
reception  
and success.*

*She turns  
Christian,  
and is bapt-  
ized.*

A.D. 1622.

him in the Christian religion, which, he said, he was extremely desirous to embrace, and Don John immediately dispatched Don Denis de Faria, a person in priest's orders, but a Negro, and native of Metamba, together with an officer of distinction to be his godfather. These met at first with a most gracious reception, and the king seemed to relish the Christian doctrines which the good priest was explaining unto him; but when he came to talk to him of baptism, he altered his tone, and told him and his sponsor, that it was too much beneath his dignity to receive it from a man who was the son of one of his slaves; and sent them both back. His sister Zingha tried all possible means to dissuade him from a step which, she told him, could not fail of affronting the viceroy, and draw the resentment of his nation upon him, but all in vain; whilst all his courtiers extolled it as a princely act. However, that he might not too far exasperate the Portuguese, he consented that his two other sisters, Cambi and Fungi, should be sent to Angola, in order to be instructed and baptized; the former was named Donna Barbara, and the latter Donna Garzia. There was a debate in the Portuguese council, whether these two princesses should not be detained as hostages for the performance of the treaty lately concluded, which that monarch still endeavoured to elude; but that expedient being looked upon by Don John as dishonourable, they were sent back with rich presents, and arrived safe at their brother's court.

**A.D. 1625.**

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*Renews the war.*

**A.D. 1627.**

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*His defeat and death.*

Ngola Bandi, instead of executing the stipulated articles, determined to renew the war against the Portuguese, and invade some of their territories. This last action proved his ruin; for his troops were all cut off, and himself forced to swim for his life into a little island in the Coanza, about a mile long and two bow-shots in breadth, whither the Portuguese pursued and surrounded him, and where he had no other chance but either to fall into their hands, or be devoured by the wild beasts with which the place abounded. But he was speedily relieved from both by a dose of poison, which some of his attendants gave him, as was supposed, by order of his sister Zingha. However, he had taken care to send his eldest son to one of the chiefs of the Giagas, called Giaga Caza, beseeching him to take him under his care and protection, and to bring him up to the exercise of arms, and to defend him against his sister Zingha, who, though the boy's aunt, would not fail of attempting his life, in order to secure herself on the throne.

He



He judged rightly enough; for that princess was no sooner in possession of it, than she tried all the stratagems her policy could invent to corrupt the Giaga Caza to deliver him up to her, that she, as she pretended, might give him an education suitable to his birth, and the dignity for which he was designed; protesting, at the same time, in the most solemn manner, and with the most dreadful oaths, that she accepted the crown with no other view than to place it upon his head, as soon as she found him capable of assuming the reins of government. She was, it seems, a very wise and artful princess, endowed with a great presence of mind, firm in her resolutions, and of an intrepid courage, crafty, and a perfect mistress in the art of dissembling: above all, she inherited her brother's jealous and cruel temper, and was ready to sacrifice the nearest persons to her revenge, who gave her the least umbrage. The Giaga was fully apprised of her character, and gave the less heed to her fair pretences and protestations, or rather, they only served to increase his mistrust; so that he held out a considerable time against all her repeated solicitations.

His firm attachment to a nephew, who, she was conscious, had an indisputed title to the throne, joined to the fickleness of the Angolic and Metambic nations, who, she feared, would quickly be tired of her female government, and join forces with the Giaga to dethrone her in his favour, gave her the most sensible uneasiness; but she had still another cause of discontent and dread, the power and valour of the Portuguese, who had, by this time, made themselves masters of the greater part of her kingdom, and engrossed all the commerce. They had built fortresses on every convenient spot that suited them, and especially near her principal towns, which they could batter in pieces upon the least dislike. This consideration, together with the dreadful apprehensions she was in lest her rival nephew should make such overtures, as might bring them over to his interest, kept her mind upon such a continual rack, that she resolved at last to rid herself of so dangerous a competitor.

The method to which she had recourse, in order to over-reach his trusty guardian, was to renew all her former protestations of affection and zeal for his pupil, and of her sincere intentions of placing the crown upon his head, the weight of which she had long since found too heavy for one of her sex to bear; especially under all the other various difficulties which the realm then laboured under,

*Her dreadful apprehensions from the Portuguese.*

*She out-wits the Giaga.*

to say nothing of the remorse she felt for withholding it from the lawful and only male heir; for such, she said, she should always deem him, if she was once convinced that he was, in other respects, fit and worthy to wield the Angolic sceptre. This doubt, she added, was the only thing that prevented her resigning it to him; and therefore she now earnestly intreated his faithful guardian to consent that she might have an interview with his ward, though ever so short; protesting, at the same time, that she would detain him no longer than he should himself propose.

*Murders  
Fernaphew.*

By these pretences the crafty queen at length gained her end: the credulous Giaga was easily persuaded that there could be no great danger in consenting to so short an interview, and sent the unfortunate prince to her, attended with a suitable retinue. She seemed at first to receive him with such affectionate tenderness, as removed all cause of suspicion: but no sooner had she got him securely in her power, than she stabbed him with her own hand, and ordered his body to be thrown into the Coanza.

*War against the  
Portuguese.*

The next effort, and what she had now most at heart, was to deliver the realm from the encroaching and hated Portuguese, who were now become so numerous, wealthy, and powerful, that they were dreaded by all her subjects. As she was naturally of a martial temper, she did not hesitate long in her resolution of entering into a war against them. She only delayed declaring it, till she had made all the necessary provisions, and strengthened herself by alliances with the Giagas and other idolatrous powers, who hated those strangers no less than she, and who all readily came into her measures. Besides these, she had got the Hollanders into a private league with her, and the king of Kongo to assist her with a good number of his troops. With all this combined force she attacked the Portuguese so suddenly and unexpectedly, that she gained some slight advantages over them. The Hollanders made themselves masters of San Paulo de Loanda, and soon after of some of the principal provinces of the kingdom, whilst the Portuguese forces were employed against her, as will be seen in the sequel.

**A.D. 1641.**

*Loanda San  
Paulo taken  
by the Hol-  
landers.*

*Recovered  
by the  
Portuguese.*

This great loss was however recovered about seven years after, by their brave captain-general, Don Salvadore Correa, an officer of great experience. He was then at Fernambuco, making all the necessary preparations for that expedition; according to the orders he had received from

Lisbon.

Lisbon. He set sail on the 12th of June, at the head of eleven ships of war, and other transports, and, with a fair wind, arrived on the African coasts, about sixteen leagues short of Loanda. Here he was overtaken by a violent storm, which scattered his fleet, and damaged some of his best ships; but that did not hinder his making a regular descent, in spite of the strenuous opposition of the Dutch, though not without a deal of bloodshed on both sides. The siege of Loanda was formed presently after, and carried on with such vigour, that the besieged were forced to demand a truce for three days, and to engage to surrender the place, in case no succour appeared before the expiration of that time. It was well they granted them no longer respite, for the Dutch fleet appeared seven days after the signing the articles; but the place had been surrendered, and the Portuguese four days in possession of it by that time; the recovery of which was quickly followed by that of all their other Angolic conquests<sup>2</sup>.

A.D. 168.  
August 15.

The successes which queen Zingha had gained against them proved still more short-lived. Her allies, the Kongoesse, were soon after so completely overthrown, that they were forced to sue for peace, which the Portuguese did not grant till they had given them a sufficient number of hostages, and yielded some considerable posts that lay convenient for them, and which they immediately took care to secure by fortresses. So that being now entirely free from all danger on that side, and having no other enemies but her and her idolatrous allies, they found no great difficulty to reduce her to the last extremity: every battle fought against her was doubly successful, and forced some of her allies to withdraw their forces, whilst her own daily lessened by the great numbers that were either slain or taken prisoners.

*The Kongoesse abandoned her.*

These defeats followed one another so close, that she found herself abandoned not only by all her allies, but by her own forces. She was constrained to abdicate her dominions, and to retire into some of the eastern deserts, where the Portuguese did not think it worth their while to molest her. They contented themselves with leaving her for some time to ruminate upon her desperate circumstances, after which they sent her some pacific proposals, wherein they engaged to re-enthronize her upon certain con-

*Proposal: of the Portuguese refused.*

<sup>2</sup> Labat ex Cavaz. lib. iii. p. 98, & seq. Dappet, & al. supra citat.



ditions, but such as it was not likely a princess of her high spirit would ever agree to, since they would have reduced her to the degree not only of a tributary vassal to the king of Portugal, but of an humble dependent upon his rapacious governors and their deputies, whilst they left her to enjoy only the bare shadow of royalty. She therefore rejected them with a becoming scorn, and declared, that however her dastardly subjects might shamefully desert her, their queen disdained the thought of submitting to any foreign power. This answer was no other than what they might, and in all probability did, expect from a princess of her haughty and martial spirit. To mortify her the more, and to render her condition still more desperate, they set up another king of Angola in her stead, to amuse the people with a mock shew of royalty, and to prevent the states of the kingdom electing one from among the princes of the blood, who might prove less attached to their nation than one of their own chusing.

*John, the  
first Christian  
king.*

The person they pitched upon was a young prince descended from the royal family, named Angola Oarii, son of the old Gingha Bandi Angola. But the first thing they did was to oblige him to turn Christian before they crowned him. He was accordingly baptized, and had the name of John given to him, which was that of the king of Portugal, to whom he was now a mere vassal, with little more than the name of king. For by this time the Portuguese were masters of the greater part of his provinces, and had assigned him only so much land in them as would serve him to keep up a kind of mock royalty, and as many subjects as were necessary to cultivate them; and if they allowed him any towns, they were only such as were within cannon-shot of their fortresses, and consequently could not give them the least umbrage; especially as they obliged the inhabitants to become Christians, in order to make themselves still surer of their fidelity. John I. and the first Christian king, did not long enjoy his imaginary dignity, before he was taken off by an unexpected death, occasioned most probably by the grief he conceived at the hard treatment which he met with from his masters the Portuguese, who did not let the throne continue long vacant, before they substituted another of the same stamp.

*His death.*

*Philip, the  
second  
Christian  
king.*

This new king, named Philip at his baptism, was obliged to accept of the titular crown upon the same hard terms that had been imposed upon his predecessor, and

proved

proved very complying and submissive to them. He shewed himself more particularly zealous for maintaining and propagating Christianity, and encouraging the missionaries and other preachers, during his whole reign, which proved a long and happy one, as far as his subjection to a foreign yoke could permit it to be, for he lived to the year 1660.

In the mean while the vindictive queen Zingha, exasperated even to fury to see herself stripped of eleven of her best provinces, and almost of her authority and tribute in the remaining five, which obeyed her no farther than they saw it suitable to their interest, whilst those interlopers ruled paramount in Angola, and had, in some measure, confined her to her Metamban dominions, conceived such an invincible aversion against them and their religion, that she gave up wholly not only to all the idolatrous superstitions, but to all the horrid and inhuman rites of the Giagas, and even strove to outdo them in those actions which are the most shocking to human nature, and to the most diabolical ceremonies of their singhillos, or priests. She even took that office upon herself, and became not only one of them, but the very chief of that abominable sect. Such was her authority and influence over that vast mixture of them, of which she had composed her monarchy, that they were ready, at the very first indication of her will, to face the most dreadful dangers, and to follow her through the most hazardous enterprizes. We have already observed that the Giagas were, of all the Ethiopians, the most furious and intrepid, and that the thirst of an enemy's blood and plunder, made them rush unconcerned into the very face of death! How much more, when headed by such an heroic queen, who shewed herself no less insatiable of her enemy's blood than the fiercest of her cannibals, nor less eager to lead them on than they to follow her, especially after they had once imbibed a notion of her being endowed with a superior power and skill above all other mortals!

*Queen Zingha's fury and apostacy.*

In this mutual confidence she made many strenuous and daring attempts to dislodge the Portuguese out of their fortresses; ; but what could myriads of such naked and undisciplined troops do against the ramparts and artillery, the great and small fire of an enemy so well disciplined and secured? As she found, therefore, so little encouragement to go on with attempts of that kind, she employed her whole force in annoying them another way, in making continual inroads into some one or other of their

*Hatred against the Portuguese.*

their ill-gotten dominions, carrying off all the captives, cattle, and other plunder that came in her way. Dreadful was the case of those, Europeans especially, that fell into her hands. They were sure to be either immediately sacrificed and devoured; or, which was still more tremendous, were doomed to be roasted by a slow fire, or even to have their flesh cut off and eaten before their faces, and themselves kept alive, that the extremity of their misery might give the greater relish to their barbarous feast, till loss of blood, and excess of torment, put an end to their lives. In this inhuman way did she continue to gall and annoy, during the space of twenty-eight years, the unhappy inhabitants, natives as well as Europeans, that lived dispersed in the country, in villages, hamlets, and other defenceless places: whilst those that lived in cities and fortresses reigned over the poor natives with such a tyrannic sway, and oppressed them with such heavy duties and taxes, that their condition was no better than downright slavery; and well may we suppose that to have been the unhappy case of the subjects, for their princes were, by this time, reduced to such a miserable state of dependency.

*The low condition of the Angolic kings.*

We have already taken notice of two of them who were set up by the Portuguese, in opposition to the princess Zingha, above mentioned, but who had little else left them than the specious title of first and second kings of Angola, together with a faint shadow of authority, and a scanty pittance to support their dignity. The last of the two, we observed, is affirmed to have enjoyed a long and peaceable reign till the year 1660, in which he died<sup>b</sup>. But this account is not consistent with what we have elsewhere hinted, that these monarchs were obliged to take refuge on the inaccessible rock of Maopongo, in order to secure themselves from the attempts of the princess Zingha, their mortal enemy; nor with what we are told in another place, that the Portuguese had made themselves masters of it, lost, and recovered it again, during the reign of Philip above mentioned, and several years before his death. Whether, therefore, that princess took it from them for a short time, or, which is more likely, it was reduced by the Dutch, it is plain the Portuguese, who have kept possession ever since their retaking it, had no reason to call that king's reign peaceable.

<sup>b</sup> Labat ex Cavazzi, lib. ii. in fin. cap. ult. Dapper, & al.



Neither could they themselves hope to enjoy any great share of peace in their newly recovered conquests, so long as they had such an implacable enemy, who neither wanted wit or malice to contrive, nor power and courage to execute, the most vindictive stratagems against their mock monarch and them. They had in vain exhausted all their politics, either to reduce her by force, or soften her by presents and fair offers. She still rejected the one with disdain, and found means to baffle the other, and would not be brought to any terms, unless they submitted to resign all their Angolic conquests. Their refusal, which was the natural consequence of a demand of that nature, was so commonly followed by some marks of her resentment, that it was with the greatest difficulty they could get any person that would venture to carry propositions; and, as for her, she disdained to offer any to them but those of the hostile kind, and that at the head of her armed Giagas. She had already advanced so far into their territories, that the terror of her arms procured her a kind of free passage; the people, old and young, making no less haste to abandon their habitations at her approach than she did to invade them.

This general dread was in a great measure owing to the reports which the Portuguese had designedly spread through all those parts, of her apostacy, and her being become the chief of the Giagan sect, of her horrid butcheries, her living upon human flesh, drinking human blood, of her being a forcerefs, and a mortal enemy to all Christians, in order to render her the more odious, and unfit to wield the Angolic sceptre, to which she laid claim: but besides that this artifice only served to inflame her resentment the more against them, it intimidated the natives to such a degree, that they all chose rather to fly from her resentment than oppose her progress, or make head against her; insomuch, that she was so far advanced towards them, as to be encamped in the small island of Dangii, in the river Coanza. This progress obliged them to alter their measures, and raise an army of Negroes to join with their own forces to drive her out of her quarters. They accordingly surrounded the island, and intrenched themselves along the banks on both sides of the river; but as these took up a great deal of room, it gave her an opportunity of attacking them with such advantage, that she killed and wounded many hundred of their blacks, and some of their white men. Elated with her success, she was preparing to repeat her blow, when, to her

*The Portuguese harassed by Zingha.*

*Raise sundry reports against her.*

*Her camp in the isle of Dangii.*

her surprize, she found that they had drawn their lines so close, and raised them to such a height, as to overlook her whole camp, and could, with their fire-arms let fly upon her naked troops, as if they had been shooting at a mark, and killed a vast number of them, especially of her chief officers. Zingha finding her situation too hot, and her men ready to murmur, agreed with them to retire into some distant province; but the difficulty was, how to cross the river with her forces, whilst the enemy lay intrenched along the coasts on each side: but as her address never used to fail on such emergencies, she had recourse to that, and, under pretence of treating with the enemy, about an accommodation, obtained a truce of three days, during which she found means, in the dead

*She retires  
to the pro-  
vince of  
Oacco.*

of night, to cross the river at a convenient place, and to lead her troops to the province of Oacco, unperceived and unmolested; insomuch, that when the sun arose, they could not see one human creature upon the island. They apprehended at first some ambush or decoy from the crafty queen; but, upon their landing, they found it wholly evacuated, and themselves shamefully overreached, and deprived of the fairest opportunity they could wish for of forcing her to surrender at discretion, and putting an end to that destructive war.

*She goes to  
save her  
own domi-  
nions of  
Metamba.*

She staid no longer in that province than till she was assured that the Portuguese were retired from the Coanza; then crossing that river once more, she marched directly towards the kingdom of Metamba, a considerable part of which had been invaded by some neighbouring princes. The speed with which she led her forces thither, and recruited her army with myriads of Giagas, who were all emulous of fighting under her banner, quickly enabled her to recover some of her territories in that kingdom. So that she now began to think herself successful and powerful enough to make a fresh attempt on the Angolic frontiers. She found herself, however, greatly mistaken, and met with such a total defeat as obliged her to send for fresh troops to make up the great loss she had sustained in this last expedition. What was still worse, she received information that the Giaga Cassangi had taken the advantage of her absence to enter Metamba with a numerous army, and had carried off the greater part of its inhabitants, destroyed all the fruits of the earth, plundered the towns of all that was valuable, and set fire to the rest, and left that kingdom in some measure desolate.

This

This last disaster quickly put a stop to all her ambitious views; obliged her to lead her forces thither again, and to endeavour for the future to secure her real dominions, instead of going in pursuit of imaginary conquests. But how dreadfully was she mortified to find her troops, whom she endeavoured to lead back by long marches, in hopes of defeating the enemy, almost ready to revolt, through vexation, for the loss of their wives, children, and cattle, which had been conveyed far enough, and secured beyond their power of recovering them, even to the farthest part of the adjoining kingdom of Benguela!

Whether the Portuguese had any hand in instigating the Giaga Cassangi to make that dreadful irruption into her dominions, by way of diversion, or no, they have not thought fit to acquaint us; though there is nothing in such a supposition that is either improbable or inconsistent with their usual conduct and policy. However that be, the apprehensions they were in, lest that artful princess should find out some stratagem to induce that Giaga to join forces with her against them, put them upon thinking of some effectual expedient to prevent such an union. To which end, the council dispatched one Anthony Coglio, a learned priest, and excellent negotiator, and Don Gaspar Borgia, an eminent officer, under pretence of negotiating a peace between them, first to the Giaga Cassangi, and afterwards to the queen. They met with a very civil reception from the first, who told them that he was very willing to live at peace with that princess, and even to let her enjoy the kingdom of Metamba, though he was the rightful heir to it, provided she would lay down her arms. This answer, which plainly indicated his friendship for the Portuguese, encouraged the priest, who was an excellent speaker, to try whether he could prevail upon him to embrace their religion, which would have bound him still faster to their interest; but he declined it in such strong terms, that the other was forced to desist; upon which they took the road to Umba, a province of Metamba, where the queen lay encamped.

At their arrival they met with such a polite reception, as gave them hopes of success: but after she had heard the proposals, she assumed a haughty threatening tone, which soon cooled their sanguine expectations; and told them, in the conclusion of her speech, that it did not become her dignity to lay down her arms, till she had brought the war she had begun to an honourable conclusion; that as to the Giagas, whose sect she had embraced

*Two deputies sent to her by the Portuguese.*

*Their reception from the queen.*

many



many years before, and which had furnished her with such a prodigious number of forces to fight in her defence, her honour and interest required that she should still keep them in her service, and under her protection; and lastly, that as to herself, she remembered, indeed, that she had formerly embraced Christianity, and been baptized, but that it was not now a proper season to propose her returning to it; and they ought to remember, that they themselves were the cause of her abandoning their religion.

Borgia easily perceived by her words and behaviour that she was not to be wrought upon in point of religion; and shifting the topic, told her in a polite manner, that she had already gained honour enough in war, and that it was now high time she should think of granting peace and tranquility to her subjects of two such powerful kingdoms, and accept of the favour and friendship of the king of Portugal, which were offered to her by his viceroy. The artful princess replied, that she was perfectly well apprised of the strength and valour of the Portuguese, and should esteem it an honour to be allied to their monarch; but that she thought it just that their respective pretensions to the dominions which she claimed from her ancestors, and of which he had deprived her, should first of all be decided either by some equitable judges, or sword in hand. Borgia vainly imagining that he had obtained enough, took his leave without farther reply, and departed soon after for Loanda San Paulo; but left the priest Coglio, upon some pretence or other, to stay behind, in reality to wait for some favourable opportunity to convert the queen, who then laboured under some lingering disease. Her distemper increasing, he took the liberty to visit her, and to tell her he doubted not but that it was sent her by the divine providence, either as a punishment or a gracious invitation to repentance. In this observation she seemed to acquiesce, in such manner as gave him some hopes; but these were soon quashed again by her recovery, when she not only relapsed into all her former practices, but obliged him to leave her court, and to return to Loanda, after a six months abode with her to no effect.

*Coglio tries  
to convert  
her.*

She then rekindled the war with fresh vigour against the Portuguese, and carried it on with various success, sometimes victorious, and at others defeated. In one attempt, before the fortress of Massangano, she not only lost a great number of her men, but saw her two sisters Cambi and

Fungi

*The war  
renewed  
against the  
Portuguese.*

Fungi taken prisoners, she herself escaping with great difficulty. This loss, instead of discouraging, exasperated her the more. She led the residue of her troops, which were still very considerable, into some of the best cultivated provinces of the Portuguese, and abandoned them to the fury of her Gias, who quickly ravaged them with fire and sword, and reduced them to a mere wilderness. But still, upon weighing her gains against her losses, she had the mortification to find the balance vastly to her disadvantage, in spite of the private intelligence she still kept up in her enemy's conquests, and even in the fortress of Massangano, where her sister Fungi was prisoner.

*Her defeat  
and narrow  
escape.*

This princess, abusing the liberty which was granted her, of walking about the town, had taken that opportunity to corrupt a great number of malecontents, both Negroes and Portuguese, to seize upon one of the gates of the place, and to open it to the forces of her sister Zingha, who was in full march thither, with a new raised army for that purpose; but her treason was happily discovered before the day appointed; upon which she was strangled, and her body cast into the river. The queen was sensibly affected with the discovery and disappointment, especially with the death of her sister, which being quickly after followed by the defeat of her allies the Dutch, and their total expulsion out of Angola, she began to look upon herself as completely unfortunate, and to enter into a stricter enquiry than ever with herself, whether those sad and repeated disasters were not the effect of the divine displeasure. She was, with her army, laying waste the province of Omanda, according to her custom, when she received these complicated ill tidings, which awoke the gnawing remorse she had felt during the twenty-eight years of her impious reign and apostacy, and forced her to recollect with horror all the blood she had shed, and all the dreadful impieties which she had committed, in compliance with the abominable Giagan sect. The first signs she gave of her remorse were a visible abatement of the cruelties she used to exercise against the Christians that fell into her hands, and especially against the priests and monks, whom she ordered, under the severest penalties, to be treated with humanity and respect. She now began to listen to them with greater attention and regard than usual, though without losing one grain of her mortal aversion to those who had stripped her of what she styled her hereditary dominions in Angola, or of her resolution not to sheathe her sword till she had forced them out of their hands.

*Her sister  
Fungi's  
treachery  
and death.*

*Zingha's  
repentment.*

*The vice-roy sends some Capuchins to her. Her artful answer to them.*

The noble viceroy Don Salvador Correa, who had wrested the kingdom out of the hands of the Hollanders, being apprised of the regard the queen had expressed towards the clergy, thought it a proper time to send some Capuchins to her, in hopes they would find her more tractable. She appeared so accordingly, gave them a generous reception, and complied with several of their requests at their first audience; but when they took occasion, at their second, to lay before her the extreme guilt and danger of her persevering in her apostacy, after a deep sigh, she expressed herself in words to this effect.

*Her artful answer to them.*

"May God be merciful to a princess, who is injured in what she holds most dear. It is not my fault that I am reduced to the condition you find me in. I should neither have sunk into, nor continued so long in it, under the most poignant stings of remorse that tongue can express, had I not been unjustly deprived of my right: pity my case! If I am driven into utter perdition, it is by those who have driven me out of my dominions. I am but too sensible of my having gone out of the right way, but must either become the contempt and scorn of my subjects, or still go on in this dangerous path, till those usurpers restore what they have robbed me of. What an unhappy life is mine, to be forced to live thus in blood and slaughter, to get rid of the fetters which they have laid on me! and since I am not strong enough to break them, do you pray to God to do it for me. In that case I will not only engage to return to the true religion, I have been so unhappily forced to renounce, but to give you all the encouragement and assistance to propagate and establish it through all my dominions." These last words, though accompanied with some seemingly penitential tears, did but too easily convince the good fathers of their lost labour; and so, with her leave, they left her court, and returned to their convent, at St. Salvador. She offered, indeed, to make them some considerable presents, but these they absolutely declined, as inconsistent with their function.

*The vice-roy's threatening message to the king of Kongo.*

In the mean time the viceroy, being resolved to secure the king of Kongo in his interest, and prevent his allying again with queen Zingha, raised a powerful army, and then sent him word, that if he desired to prevent the total ruin of his dominions, he must immediately make reparation for all the damages he had caused to the Portuguese, by his alliance with the Hollanders. The reputation which the Portuguese arms had gained during their late wars.

against



against that queen, and the dread which they had spread in all the adjacent kingdoms, quickly induced that monarch to comply, and, without any delay, to send some ambassadors to Angola, to regulate and adjust their differences, which were accordingly removed, and, in a great measure, upon the viceroy's own terms. The king engaged to enter into a strict alliance with the Portuguese, and renounce all his other alliances that were prejudicial to their interests: to supply them with good slaves, in compensation for the damage they had sustained: to discover the rich mines of gold and silver in his dominions, and perform his engagements by a former treaty, of giving leave to have them examined and wrought: to permit the Capuchins to preach the gospel in all the provinces of his dominions; and to give hostages for the execution of every article of the present treaty<sup>a</sup>.

*Makes a treaty with him.*

As soon as this treaty was ratified, the viceroy dispatched Don Ruy Pegado, an old experienced officer, remarkable for his wisdom, politeness, and zeal for religion, to the court of queen Zingha, with a noble retinue and magnificent presents for that princess, together with two letters to her, one from the king his master, and the other with full powers to conclude a firm and lasting alliance with her, provided she consented to renounce the sect of the Giagas, and to return to the church. Don Ruy was received with the utmost politeness, and the queen acknowledged, in the most grateful terms, the regard paid her by his Portuguese majesty; but laid the blame of all the hostilities that had passed on the late viceroy, Don Fernando de Souza, who had not only stripped her of her best Angolic provinces, but had even dared to proclaim one of her vassals, Ngola Oarii, king of Dongo. She added, that, provided his Portuguese majesty would assist her in the recovery of her hereditary dominions, she would readily engage to enter into an alliance with him, and to return into the bosom of the church, from which she had apostatized.

*Embassy to queen Zingha.*

*Her answer to it.*

Zingha had too much policy to think her terms would ever be complied with, unless it were by main force; and therefore kept her army still on foot, and went on with her usual hostilities and ravages, notwithstanding several other letters which the viceroy sent to her, relating to the old topic, and his remonstrances against the injury she did to Christianity, by supporting so detestable a sect, and hindering the Christian priests from performing the least

*Keeps her army on foot.*

<sup>a</sup> Cavazzi ap. Labat, ubi supra, p. 95, & seq.

function of their office, even that of baptizing of infants. He had already spent near three years in these epistolary negotiations, without any success, as there could be no hopes of inducing her to an alliance as long as she insisted on the restitution of her provinces, which the court of Portugal never designed to restore; so he contented himself with plying her with religious motives, as the most likely, if they took effect, to detach her barbarian troops from her interest; in which case she might be more easily induced, if not forced, to court their friendship and protection, and, in order to obtain it, to forego her pretensions to Angola<sup>b</sup>.

*She relents,  
and is sus-  
pected by  
her sub-  
jects.*

It plainly appeared by the sequel, that he was not mistaken in his politics; for his last letter had such an effect upon her, that her chief officers soon perceived such a visible change in her, as raised a general murmur through her army; inasmuch, that, to avoid a total defection, she was forced to have recourse to her old diabolical expedient, of sacrificing a number of male infants, to convince them of her steady adherence to their sect. The viceroy was quickly informed of this brutal sacrifice; but wisely concealed his resentment, and continued, without taking the least notice of it, to ply her with his religious expostulations. He at last sent her a solemn embassy, accompanied with the richest presents, and a proposal for entering into a joint war against some tributary princes, in which both their states were mutually concerned. He acquainted her, at the same time, with the plan he had concerted for carrying it on; at which she was so satisfied, that she readily consented to it, and honoured him from that time with her esteem and confidence. She had by this time reigned queen and chief of the sect of the Giagas almost thirty years, when an accident, or rather occurrence, which happened at the conclusion of that successful war, paved the way to her conversion. The circumstances which attended and promoted this surprising change in her, are, by the monkish writers of her reign, represented, after their usual custom, as altogether miraculous. We are more desirous to set this matter in a true light, because Dapper and other writers, not being able to give credit to all the miraculous apparatus which those popish historians tell us preceded that princess's conversion, nor to account for it in any other way, have given us a very lame and imperfect account of her surprising life and reign. We

<sup>b</sup> Cavazzi ap. Labat, ubi supra, p. 98, & seq.

are therefore to hope that this latter and most shining part of it will not be displeasing to our readers, now we have so effectually divested it of its fabulous monkish embellishments.

She had two councils, one for affairs of state and war; the other for religious concerns: the first consisted of four officers; the other of five singollos, or priests of the Giagan religion. These nine counsellors, being properly tutored beforehand, she convened to deliberate, whether she had best embrace the Christian faith, or continue in the religion of the Giagas. For this purpose she had recourse to the usual way of consulting the spirits of her ancestors; and the oracle was such as she had foreseen. The démon himself declared against his own interest, and exhorted her to be reconciled to the faith from which she had formerly apostatized.

Whilst her two councils were taken up in acting this farce, in order to induce her subjects the more readily to come into her measures, she had taken care to have her army drawn up, and prepared to expect some extraordinary result from their present consultations. As soon, therefore, as they were ended, she went out to them, and, with a majestic, yet seemingly joyful, aspect, let fly an arrow from her bow with her usual strength and vigour; then addressing herself to them, "Who is there (cried she) that is strong enough to stand against my arms, or resist the force of this arm?" They all fell a clapping their hands, exclaiming three times successively, "O glorious and mighty queen, none, none, none, will ever be able to conquer you." She afterwards harangued them to this effect, from the eminence on which she stood: "If my enemies have always dreaded me in war; if you have lavished your lives to support me in my most dangerous enterprizes, and given me the greatest proofs of your fidelity, what can hinder you from following me in my peaceful ones? I have often beheld, after the victories I have hitherto gained, the field of battle covered with a greater number of my slain subjects than of the enemy; so that I never gained a battle but what cost the lives of myriads of my faithful troops. Hurried by my blind passion, I shut my eyes against that truth, which I ought rather to have sought; but, thanks to the true God, they are opened again; and I return to him that heart and affection which I have hitherto so impiously with-held from him; and I beg of his infinite goodness, a firm and inviolable peace,

A.D. 1655.

*Her army drawn up.*

*Her speech to her army.*



in order to make those partakers of it, who have followed me through all the past tumults of war.

*Owens her apostacy.*

“ I do now freely and sincerely return to that faith and religion which I have so unhappily abandoned, to my inexpressible hurt, and that of those who have followed my example. I do, and shall ever henceforth, detest the impious Giagan sect; totally proscribe it from my presence and dominions; and if I have shewed myself exact in the observation of its horrid rites, much more so do I design to be in the observance of those of the holy gospel, to the end that my example may excite you to the same amendment of your lives. As you have, therefore, been the slaves of my capricious will, and have so often hazarded your lives, out of an immoderate desire of pleasing me, I now invite you, and shew you the way, to an eternal rest, and the blessings of an endless peace. Who is there that can reject the offers I make to you? though if there be any among you that dislikes or abhors me for what I have said, I am content that he should henceforth avoid and abandon me.”

*Perplexity about the success of it.*

Thus spoke the intrepid queen to her whole army; though, notwithstanding her last words, she was not without some great perplexity about the issue of so unexpected a declaration; nor could she well hope that the proposals of an endless rest and peace should be easily relished by a nation nurtured in all the licentiousness of war and slaughter: yet so strong and firm did their attachment to her shew itself upon this occasion, that she quickly found all her fears dispelled by their universal acclamations, which she could not but look upon as a happy omen of their speedy conversion. She lost no time to communicate the joyful news to the viceroy of Angola, by a particular express, and not long after by a solemn and pompous embassy, in which she intreated him to pass an act of oblivion on all her former misbehaviour, to restore her to the good graces of the king his master, to send her back her sister Donna Barbara (as her sister Fungi had been so justly taken off for her crime) and with her some Capuchins to complete the good work she had begun with such unexpected success.

*Her zeal misfrustrated.*

The eagerness she expressed in her request, joined to the surprising readiness of her subjects to approve of all her measures, failed not to cause some diffidence in the vice-

c Cavaz. ap. Labat, ubi supra, p. 116, & seq.

roy's council, to whom her former artful behaviour and fickle temper gave but too much occasion of mistrust; but the generous viceroy readily complied with all her requests, exhorting her to continue stedfast in her good resolutions, and, upon that condition, assuring her of his Portuguese majesty's inviolable friendship and alliance. As to Donna Barbara, he only insisted upon two hundred slaves for her ransom, one hundred and twenty of whom should be for the king, and the other eighty for himself, and the officers under him; or, if she chose it rather, an equivalent in money. The fathers Capuchins, so earnestly desired by her, were immediately sent, with father Antony de Gaeta at their head, a person of great piety and merit, and highly respected by the queen. He was now constituted prefect of the Metambic mission, by a charter, dated April 8, 1656, and arrived quickly after at the forests of Messangano, where the princess Barbara was kept prisoner till the ransom was paid, and the treaty signed by her sister.

*Ransom demanded for her sister.*

A.D. 1656.

The queen had, it seems, been more tardy than was expected in the performance of those articles; and it is hardly to be doubted but she shewed a great reluctance against giving up her rich Angolic dominions to the Portuguese, and confining herself to the wild and barren districts of Metamba; yet she was to expect neither favour nor alliance from them on any other terms. They held her, sister still prisoner, though they paid her all the outward respect due to her quality, and had removed her from Messangano to Embacca, their remotest frontier on the river Lucalla, there to be detained till the arrival of her ransom, at which she expressed no small displeasure; but they excused themselves, by throwing the blame on her sister's neglect of performing her engagements. When Captain Emanuel Flois arrived at the queen's court from the viceroy, to press her upon that head, she loudly complained of their dissidence, and the detention of her sister, and, on his second audience, threatened them with a more dreadful war than any she had yet waged against them.

*Her tardiness to comply.*

*Flois sent ambassador to her.*

This strange behaviour the ambassador imagined was suggested by her ministers, who were utterly averse to the new treaty she had made with Portugal. She exhibited accordingly such sensible tokens of her displeasure and dissatisfaction, as left him no room to doubt of their being real; so that dreading now more than ever the effects of

<sup>1</sup> Cavaz. ap. Labat, ubi supra, p. 123, & seq.

them, he was obliged to alter his tone, and instead of pressing her upon the article of cession, he tried all possible means to sooth her, and to excuse the viceroy's detaining her sister, not as a prisoner, but as an hostage; a method practised by all European princes. However, as she made no answer to all his plausible palliatives, but heaved a deep sigh, he immediately dispatched a courier, with the news, to the viceroy, who sent express orders to the good father Antony above mentioned, then at Embacca with Donna Barbara, to hasten to the queen, and to use his utmost endeavours to bring her to a better mind <sup>e</sup>.

*Father  
Anthony  
is sent to  
the queen.*

The good man, though at that time very ill, by the change of climate, delayed not to obey; and as he had sent an express to the queen to apprise her of his coming, she received him with all the marks of honour, and went, at the head of a numerous court, out of Chilombo, where she then resided, to receive him. She likewise ordered all the people to come out and line the way from the eminence, where she met him, and to kneel as he passed. She herself, as soon as she perceived him near enough to hear her, bowed to him, and cried, "Blessed and welcome be the minister of the true God; you have my hearty thanks, good father, for coming to me, which gives me an assurance that I shall, by your means, be reconciled to my God, and restored to the peace of conscience which I had lost." So saying, she tenderly kissed the crucifix which he held to her, and, after several other acts of devotion, took him by the hand, and conducted him to her palace. There, being seated on a throne erected for the purpose, she caused him to sit down close to her on her right hand, and the ambassador Flois at some distance on her left, whilst the rest of the court stood up at a greater distance.

*Her zeal  
for Christi-  
anity.*

When the father came to try his Christian eloquence to persuade her to forego a temporal kingdom for the sake of an eternal one, she answered him only by her sighs and tears. However, if we may believe our author <sup>h</sup>, his discourse had such an effect upon her, that she found her mind quite eased from the worldly considerations which her ambition and false politics had crowded into it, so that she immediately set about dispatching her sister's ransom to the viceroy. How the grand article about the Angolic provinces was settled upon this occasion, we are not told: each party had its pretensions, and those of the queen were

<sup>e</sup> Cavaz. ap. Labat, p. 126, & seq.

<sup>h</sup> Ibid. p. 132, & seq.



certainly the justest; but her antagonists were the most powerful, as well as most tenacious; so that not being able to conclude a firm and lasting peace with her, they contented themselves; for the present, to strike up a short truce, till their differences could be adjusted.

At this time matters began to assume a new face. The princess Barbara, after a long and tedious detention, was released and sent home with all the marks of honour, and very valuable presents. Upon her entrance into her sister's dominions, she was received with extraordinary magnificence; all her subjects expressing their excessive joy by music, dancing, and panegyric sonnets; they had provided a stately palankin to convey her in, and persons of every rank were contending all the way, with the utmost eagerness, for the honour of carrying her. Her shortest way to court being through the province of Souva, where the roads are extremely difficult, and, in some parts, almost impassable, care had been taken to make them more practicable. At court she was received by all the queen's officers, civil and military, and with the loudest shouts of the people. As soon as she came in sight of her sister, she alighted out of her palankin, and threw herself prostrate on the ground; then she arose, and marched directly to her, and, on her knees, kissed her hands, and thanked her for all her favours; whilst the queen, throwing her arms about her, held her for some time, without being able to speak or move, they not having seen one another during the space of nine years. The rejoicings made upon that occasion lasted a whole week, and the concourse was so great, and the hurry and bustle so loud, that the good Capuchins, quite unused to it, could neither perform their devotions, nor sleep in their beds<sup>1</sup>.

*Great rejoicings at her arrival.*

As soon as the festivity was ended, the queen, who had now lost all hopes, and, in all appearance, even the desire of recovering her Angolic provinces, began to convert her whole attention to the propagation of the gospel among her subjects. The Capuchins, who were now become her chief counsellors, especially father Anthony, had so effectually alienated her heart from all her ambitious and warlike projects, that she seemed to have wholly devoted the short remainder of her life to the solid establishment of Christianity within her own dominions, and to illustrate it by her own example. Her sister Donna Barbara, who had been likewise converted to Christianity during the five first

*Her reconciliation to the Portuguese.*

<sup>1</sup> Cavaz. ap. Labat, p. 133, & seq.

years of her captivity, expressed no less zeal towards that good and glorious work; so that all her tumultuous thoughts and views seemed wholly swallowed up in religion, and she was now more than ever at leisure to listen to the instructions of her spiritual guides. These had so perfectly reconciled her to the Portuguese, that she looked upon them as her best friends, whom before she abhorred, as the usurpers of her hereditary dominions, and there reigned a perfect harmony between her and them.

*Builds a church in her capital, consecrated to the Blessed Virgin Mary.*

She was very desirous to have a church built in her capital; but as it would have taken up too much time to procure proper workmen and materials from Portugal, her impatience induced her to rear up one of timber, the direction of which she committed to the care of father Anthony, who was supplied with a sufficient number of slaves to assist him, and vested with an absolute power over them, that they might obey him in every thing. It was seventy spans in length, twenty-nine in breadth, and twenty-five in height (H); the walls were of mud, white-washed within and without, and the floor covered with curious mats, woven with white and black chequer-work, and some other neat ornaments. The chancel, where the great altar stood, was covered with rich tapestry, which the queen gave out of her own wardrobe. The altar, on which was to be placed the crucifix, was also covered with some rich tapestry. A beautiful painting of the Virgin Mary, drawn after that of S. Maria Maggiore at Rome, was the altar-piece, and highly admired by the natives. All things being prepared, both the church and city were dedicated to the Virgin Mary; and after the consecration of the former, the latter took the name of St. Mary of Metamba.

*The queen's edict for new converts.*

The ceremony having been performed with all possible pomp, amidst a vast concourse of people, great numbers, after the example of their queen, came voluntarily to the church, and begged to be instructed and baptized; but were obliged, before their admission, to promise never to converse, after baptism, with any idolaters. She afterwards caused an edict to be published through the kingdom, expressly forbidding the following practices of heathenism then in vogue, under the severest penalties.

1. The invocation and consultation of demons, and offering sacrifices to them or their idols.

(H) The Portuguese palm is about eight inches and a quarter.

2. The

2. The exposition of infants in the fields.
3. The old superstitious rites upon their new-born infants, which should now be brought to church to be baptized.
4. The exclusion of female children from baptism, or other benefits of the church.
5. The eating of human flesh on any pretence or occasion whatever.
6. The retaining their old images or idolatrous utensils, which were now ordered to be burned or delivered to the missionaries, and their continuing in any of the old methods and abominable rites in their oaths or forms of swearing<sup>k</sup>.

The severity she used in punishing all delinquents and their abettors, joined to the facility with which she discovered them by the numerous spies she had every where, quickly enforced a strict obedience to this edict. But there were two other enormous abuses still to be reformed: one was the plurality of women, in which the great indulged themselves; and the other the tyranny of the lords, who did not allow their vassals to marry without their licence, for which they made them pay very dear. The abolishing of the first was the depriving them of a pleasure, and that of the second, of an income, which they were not likely to forego without great murmuring and discontent.

The first of these, however, she easily brought about by her condescending, though with great difficulty, at the earnest persuasion of father Anthony, to shew an example to the rest in her own person, and consenting to marry a young handsome courtier, named Don Salvador, but of mean birth, being no more than the son of a slave, who had fled from Loanda, and had listed in her service, in which he had raised himself to a considerable rank. The handsomeness of his person, however, was thought to make sufficient amends for the lowness of his birth, and she disdained not to be married to him, in the most public manner, in her new church, with great pomp and solemnity; and, after the ceremony was over, to declare him her lawful husband, in the presence of her whole court. This step was looked upon so much the more extraordinary, as she was then in the seventy-fifth year of her age. Not content with shewing a good example in her own person, she likewise obliged her beloved sister to act the same part, and, much against her inclination, to take up with an old gene-

*The queen, to encourage marriage, takes a husband.*

<sup>k</sup> Cavaz, ubi supra, p. 141, & seq.



ral. This old warrior, naturally haughty, cruel, and peevish, no sooner saw himself master of a princess, who was to be heiress to the crown, than he suffered his arrogance to swell to a degree not of contempt only, but of cruelty towards her; insomuch, that she was forced to acquaint her sister with it, telling her, that the captivity she had suffered under the Portuguese was a heaven to what she felt under him. But what was surprising to the whole court, the vindictive queen, who, some months before, would have sent for him at the first complaint of that nature, and ordered him to be cut in pieces before her, did not so much as shew the least resentment, lest he should occasion some revolt, and contented herself with declaring, that, for the future, she would never concern herself in matrimonial affairs, but let every one marry according to their own liking. In a word, partly by her persuasions and example, and partly by the pious endeavours of her Capuchins, she had the pleasure to see her edict against polygamy generally complied with, and those persons severely punished who did not conform to its injunctions.

*Suppresses  
the tyranny  
of the lords.*

She met with much greater opposition in suppressing the other prerogative of the nobles: it was not without great difficulty and heart-burning, that those lords, or petty tyrants, were brought to forego so great and profitable a privilege over their vassals; but her address, authority, and steady resolution, at length got the better of their opposition; and she was the less apprehensive of any insurrection, such as they seemed to threaten, as she was sure it was the interest of all her inferior subjects to support her in the abolition of an old custom, which had been so burthensome and grievous to them.

*The great  
progress of  
the gospel.*

Thus far every thing succeeded to her wish; and what seemed to give her the greatest pleasure, she beheld the visible progress which Christianity had made, within less than two years, among her subjects, and the zeal they shewed in conforming to it, notwithstanding their innate barbarity, which gave her hopes that she might live to see it happily spread through all her dominions. This hopeful calm was however strangely troubled by several dreadful calamities which succeeded each other. A threatening comet, of an extraordinary size and fiery aspect, ushered in a most dreadful storm, accompanied by thunder and lightning from the four quarters of the atmosphere, which overturned all that opposed its way, tore up the largest trees by the roots, and did considerable damage.

damage. This was followed by violent and repeated shocks of earthquakes, which split the rocks, and left hideous chasms, in several parts of the kingdom, of unfathomable depth. These were succeeded by a general famine and contagion, which carried off myriads of the poor people. The peace that had been negotiating with the Portuguese was still unsigned and un concluded; and, what was still worse, there was no prospect of its being ratified: the reader will easily see where the fault lay, when he is told, that the terms upon which the Portuguese offered to grant it to the queen imported,

1st. That as soon as they were well assured of the sincerity of her conversion, they would yield to her, as a present, some of those countries in the kingdom of Dongo, or Angola, which they were in possession of. *Portuguese articles offered to the queen.*

2dly. That in consideration of the said present, which should in no wise be interpreted as an investiture, the queen should pay yearly a certain acknowledgement to the king of Portugal, who should be at liberty to withdraw the said present whenever she failed of making the said acknowledgement.

3dly. That a free commerce should be opened between those two states, as well for slaves as for other merchandizes.

4thly. That the queen should molest none of the lords that were feudatory to his majesty, whatever damages and ravages they might have committed in her dominions of Metamba, during the late wars.

5thly. That she should restore all the Portuguese slaves that had taken refuge within her dominions.

6thly. That she should deliver up the Giaga Colanda, who had revolted from the Portuguese, to the viceroy of Angola, upon assurance given that his crime should not be punished (I).

The queen conceived such displeasure at these conditions, so opposite to what she had been made to expect from the generosity of the Portuguese, that she relapsed

(I) This Giagan chief, weary of the Portuguese yoke, had retired from them at the head of a thousand stout soldiers, and a much greater number of slaves, some leagues beyond the river Lucalla, and put himself under the queen's protection; which she had the more readily granted, as he was able to be very serviceable to her by his incursions on the Portuguese, in case their ungenerous treatment should oblige her to renew the war.

into

into her old distemper, which was a violent fever attended with an inflammation; during which father Antony, her chief confident, and a creature of the viceroy, never left soliciting her, in the strongest terms, to make her peace with God, and to accept of that which was offered to her by the Portuguese.

*Noble answer to the articles.*

To his remonstrances she replied, 1st. "That with respect to her conversion, as it was neither owing to any design of obtaining a peace, or other worldly motives, but the divine grace that recalled her, she was resolved to persevere in it to her last breath.

2dly. That as to her going over to the Giagan sect, she had, in a great measure, been forced to it, by the ill treatment she had received from the viceroy.

3dly. That the king of Portugal would do a generous act in restoring some of her Angolic dominions; but it would be still a more noble and royal instance of liberality if he restored them all.

4thly. That as to her paying homage to him, neither her mind nor heart was base enough to submit to it; and that, as she had refused the proposal whilst she lived amongst the Giagas, much more did she think herself above it now she was a Christian queen, and owed neither tribute nor homage to any but to the Supreme Power, from whom she had received both her being and her kingdom. That nevertheless, if she could be convinced that there was any thing in her dominions that would be acceptable to his Portuguese majesty, she would readily make a voluntary offer of it to him, being fully persuaded of his generosity and gratitude. And, as to the rest of the articles, such was her desire of making a firm and lasting peace with him, that she would not make any difficulty of subscribing them without reserve.

A.D. 1657.

*Treaty of peace concluded.*

This answer was not thought altogether satisfactory by the council of Loanda, who would gladly have obliged her to acknowledge herself tributary to their monarch; but father Antony, who was perfectly well acquainted with her disposition, and kept a constant correspondence with the viceroy, had so far assured him that she would never consent to it, that he easily prevailed upon them to give it up, and a peace was quickly after concluded upon the following terms:

1st. That the river Lucalla should be thenceforth the boundary of the two kingdoms of Metamba and Angola.

2dly. That neither side should thenceforth give any reception to the fugitive slaves of the other, but send them back



back without any delay, together with the prisoners that had been taken during the last war.

3dly. That the queen should remain wholly free and exempt from all tribute and homage whatsoever, provided she agreed and subscribed to all the other articles formerly stipulated. This treaty was signed by the queen and the viceroy in the month of April, 1657; immediately after which ratification the prisoners were conveyed to the frontiers, and exchanged, and the contents of the treaty were dispatched to the court of Lisbon, to be ratified by the king, who accordingly sent a letter to the viceroy and council, dated November 24, of the same year, in which he approves and confirms every thing that had been concluded in that treaty, and acquaints them that he had wrote likewise to queen Zingha; but his letter has not yet been made public<sup>1</sup>.

During these transactions the queen had prudently be-  
thought herself of an expedient to save her honour with re-  
spect to the Giaga Calanda. Some time before the ratifica-  
tion of the treaty, she had privately sent for and acquaint-  
ed him with the viceroy's demand, telling him, at the  
same time, that though she doubted not of his keeping  
his word, and forgiving him, yet she advised him to go  
out of her dominions, and settle in some distant country  
from the Portuguese frontiers; but she forbade him, on  
pain of her highest resentment, to commit the least out-  
rage or hostility within their conquests, in his retreat. He  
thanked her majesty, and seemed to acquiesce in her ad-  
vice; but as soon as he had reached his strong-hold, he  
set about fortifying it, and putting himself rather in a  
state of defiance than defence, he having got, by that  
time, a considerable army on foot, which quickly spread  
a general terror all around him. The Portuguese failed  
not of complaining of it to her as a breach of her word;  
to whom she answered, that they should soon see how  
faithfully she was resolved to stand to it.

*Expedient  
to save her  
honour.*

*The Giaga  
breaks his  
word with  
her.*

Being by this time recovered from her late illness, she  
ordered her whole army to be drawn up in arms, on the  
great square before St. Mary's church, where she likewise  
appeared in an elegant martial dress, and made them per-  
form their exercises, and a kind of mock fight, in which  
they shewed an uncommon dexterity in handling their  
weapons, and in their great variety of evolutions. She  
entered herself into the lists, and, after a short but en-  
livening speech, began to wield her arms with such sur-

*Is revenged  
on him.*

<sup>1</sup> Cavaz, apud Labat, lib. iv. p. 163, & seq.

prising agility and vigour considering her years, that the good father Antony, who followed her every where, could not forbear complimenting her upon her strength and dexterity. The mock fight was no sooner ended than she began her march at the head of her troops, having taken care beforehand to get all the passes and defiles shut up, to prevent the Giaga's escape. Early next morning, being the 16th of December, she caused his camp to be surrounded on every side, and then ordered her royal standard to be displayed.

The Giaga, in despair to see himself environed by the forces of the exasperated queen, could think of no other way to escape her resentment than that of the deepest submission, and the most solemn promises of being henceforth entirely devoted to her service. But whilst his deputies were soliciting his pardon with the queen, some of his chief officers, who suspected his base design, roused the whole army to action, and fell so furiously on the queen, that they had already forced their way through her lines, and thrown them into great disorder. This circumstance obliged her immediately to order her men to attack them in flank and rear; a service which was performed with such bravery and success, that they made a horrid slaughter amongst them, none hardly escaping their fury, but such as were too nimble to be overtaken in their flight; who having swam across the river Lucalla, fled to the Portuguese garrison of Embacca, where they hoped to meet with better quarter. All the rest were massacred without mercy, except fifteen hundred, whom they took prisoners. The Giaga was found among the slain, and his head was brought to the queen, who ordered it to be sent to the viceroy of Loanda, to let him see how well she knew how to keep her word, as well as to punish those that broke their's with her<sup>a</sup>.

*He is defeated and slain.*

A. D 1658.

She returned in triumph to her capital of St. Mary Metamba; towards the end of the month of March following; when finding herself too old and fatigued to lead her forces against the king of Ajacca, who had invaded some of her dominions during her absence, she committed that expedition to an old experienced general, named Barian Gonga, who quickly obliged the aggressor to submit to her terms.

*An accident happens which makes her relapse.*

There happened, not long after, an accident during father Antony's absence, who was gone to preach the gospel in other provinces, which was likely to have proved

<sup>a</sup> Ibid. p. 166, & seq.

fatal to Christianity, through the remissness or rather fickleness of the queen. An ancient officer, in high esteem with her, who had been formerly baptized, but had since degenerated into libertinism, was taken ill and died, before the good father could come to reconcile him to the church; but her regard for him induced her to send orders to father Bennet, the only Capuchin, except a lay-brother, that was then in the monastery, to give him Christian burial, a request which he refused to comply with. This refusal she resented to such a degree, that she immediately gave leave that he should be buried after the Giagan manner; upon which a place was quickly prepared, and the number of human victims, suitable to his quality, conveyed with his corpse to a neighbouring wood to be interred. What was still more strange, the queen, at the head of a numerous court, assisted at the diabolical ceremony, though not without feeling, as she afterwards pretended, some violent checks of conscience. She had already gone so far as to inspirit and comfort those unhappy victims which were designed to accompany the deceased into the other world, and would in all likelihood have sent some of them thither with her own hand, had not an unexpected accident put a stop to the hellish solemnity.

This was brother Ignatio, the lay Capuchin above mentioned, who, after having tried in vain to persuade father Bennet to comply with the queen's orders, to avoid worse consequences, had, in a fit of zeal, taken the crucifix off the altar, and running with it in his arms to the burying-place, cried out all the way he went, "He that is for God, let him follow the image of his crucified Son." He was met by the secretary and another minister of state, who were going to the convent to consult with father Bennet about some proper means to prevent the horrid scene, who asked him whither he was going with the holy image? but could get no other answer than the words above mentioned; upon which they, turning back, accompanied him, one on each side. At their arrival at the burying-place, they saw vast crowds of people, who were come thither to see the ceremony, to whom he cried aloud in their native language, *fugam-mena*, that is, *down on your knees*. They were all thunderstruck at his words, and knelt on each side; while he proceeded till the queen's guards, who were placed at the entrance of the inclosure, stopped him from going farther. This obstruction, however, did not hinder him from repeating the

*But is recalled by a lay Capuchin's stratagem.*



*Abolishes  
the Gigan  
impious  
rites.*

same words as loud as he could speak, till the queen, who stood under a portico, heard them, and knowing his voice, came and fell before the image, without uttering a word, her shedding plenty of tears. The good brother took advantage of her silence and confusion, to make her a pathetic reprimand for her impiety; and, at the same time, to oblige her to swear at the foot of the crucifix, that she would never more permit any such diabolical ceremonies to be performed within her realm, be the persons or occasion what they would. She not only swore it in the most solemn manner, but ordered the unhappy victims to be set at liberty, and the tomb, with its whole apparatus, to be demolished. Then she followed him to the convent, carrying the crucifix, and attended by numberless crouds of people, expressing their joy by their loud acclamations. Being arrived at the church, she once more prostrated herself to the crucifix, begging pardon for her crime, and renewing her vow to abolish that inhuman ceremony through all her dominions, which she faithfully performed accordingly <sup>b</sup>.

A.D. 1658.

*Her  
embassy to the  
Pope.*

There was now nothing wanting to complete the progress of Christianity, but a new supply of missionaries from Europe; to obtain which, nothing, she thought, could contribute more effectually than the sending a solemn embassy to Rome, to pay homage to the pope in her name, and acquaint him with the hopeful prospect there now was of planting the Christian faith through all her dominions. The men she chose for this important service were her chief secretary of state, the person mentioned a little higher for his laudable zeal, and the good father Antony, who having by this time resided there near a year and a half, could give an exact account to his holiness of the state of Christianity, and what was most expedient to settle it among those barbarians upon a solid foundation. Those two worthy persons gladly accepted of the office; and father Antony assured her majesty, that his commission once happily ended, he would return and end his days among her subjects.

They set out accordingly for Massangano, where they learned that pope Alexander VII. had desired the superiors of that mission to chuse father Seraphin de Cortona, for whom he had a particular esteem, to succeed father Antony in his commission from the queen of Metaniba; which he having yielded to him, father Seraphin and the se-

<sup>b</sup> Cavaz. ubi sup. p. 171. & seq.

cretary failed for Loanda, in order to embark for Europe. But here they found their voyage stopped by the prohibition which the viceroy had received from his court, not to suffer any ministers of the princes of Ethiopia to embark for any place, or upon any commission, without an express order from his Portuguese majesty. Father Seraphin thereupon having prevailed upon the queen's ambassador to deliver his mistress's letter to the pope, and his other instructions to him, and to return to Metamba, set sail for Rome the first opportunity, and the ambassador departed for Metamba. At the same time father John Antony Cavazzi de Monte Cucullo was sent to the queen's court to supply the place of her favourite father Antony de Gaeta, and to acquaint her majesty with the reasons of this exchange, which he told her was intended for the advantage of her majesty and her subjects. This new Capuchin was constituted prefect of the Metambic mission, and was to have his residence at Massangano; for which place he took his journey in the rainy season, and in such a bad state of health, as had nearly deprived him of his life, and the world of his curious and valuable history.

*Father  
Cavazzi  
sent to the  
queen.*

The gracious reception he met with from the queen, and the joy which appeared in the looks of the inhabitants that came to pay their respects to him in the way to Massangano, would have made him forget the fatigues and dangers of his journey<sup>d</sup>, had he not been so frequently attacked with his old disease, partly through the fatigues of his function, and partly through the excessive heat of the climate, which obliged the queen, for fear of losing him, though much against her inclination, to send him to Embacca for change of air. She requested of him, among other things, to send her a priest immediately, as she had none to officiate in her court and capital, but the good brother Ignatio, who was not in priest's orders, and could only catechize and baptize the moribunds; he accordingly dispatched father Bennet to her from Massangano, with all possible diligence.

*Is kindly  
received by  
her.*

This last had been hardly a year at her court, before they were alarmed with the news of a powerful army raised by the viceroy of Loanda, and the report he had caused to be spread that it was designed against the kingdom of Metamba. The affrighted queen had immediate recourse

*A false  
alarm  
caused by  
the Portu-  
guese.*

<sup>c</sup> Ibid. p. 178, & seq.  
78, & seq.

<sup>d</sup> De his vide Labat, ubi supra, p.

to her good old friend father Anthony Gaeta, who now resided at Massangano, as prefect of the mission, and, in the strongest terms, entreated him, by an express dispatched to him for that end, to hasten to her without delay. The father, without taking leave of any one, or even a companion with him, began his journey, and in about six days arrived at her court, acquainted her majesty that he had taken care to go to the Portuguese army, and had been assured by them that they had not the least design against her, but were fully resolved to live in the strictest peace and amity with her, according to the tenor of the late treaty: he added, that the contrary report had been raised to conceal their real design, which was to surprise and punish some revolted people. This assurance dissipated all her jealousies; so that, having nothing to apprehend from that quarter, they had the more leisure to attend to their religious functions, it being now the holy week, and the city filled with a vast concourse of Christians, who came to assist at the solemnity of the season.

A.D. 1659.

*Zingha  
builds a  
new city,  
palace, and  
church.*

He staid with her about four months, and then, though much against the queen's liking, returned to his residence of Massangano, where he had not been long, before the viceroy of Angola invited him to come and attempt a mission in some of the unconverted provinces of that kingdom, in order to open a commerce with them. But as neither of them succeeded, he returned back to Metamba, at the queen's request, to assist her in building a new city, palace, and church, in a convenient and airy spot of ground, she had pitched upon, on the banks of the river Wamba. He arrived at her court in the month of May, and saw the vast preparations she had already made, and a prodigious number of stones broke from the rock, which she had caused to be brought to the place, upon the shoulders of several thousands of slaves, who were employed in that work, over which brother Ignatio was appointed to preside. What her new buildings wanted in beauty and symmetry she endeavoured to compensate by the richness of the ornaments, in which she was so lavish, that even in the laying the first stone of her new church, having dismissed all the workmen, and her own retinue, excepting father Antony and Brother Ignatio, she buried under it, a diamond of immense value.

*Adorns the  
church  
with rich  
presents.*

The church being designed to be dedicated to St. Anne, whose name she bore, she had likewise procured an eminent

c Ibid. p. 198.

painter,



painter, at a vast price, to paint that saint in the most elegant taste, to serve for an altar-piece. She presented it with some of her richest tapestry, and other ornaments, particularly with a fine lamp, made of the silver which had till then plated the chest that contained her brother's bones; both which, though with no small reluctance, she was obliged to deliver up to the prefect; upon any other terms he refused to admit her to the holy communion, which she was earnest to receive, for the first time, at the approaching festival. The father caused the chest and bones to be burnt, and the plate to be sent to Loanda, and to be wrought into the said curious lamp, to burn continually before the miraculous crucifix, in her new-built church. He likewise obliged her to give up sundry other superstitious trinkets, as rings, and ear-rings of gold and silver, which she wore as amulets. She not only complied with singular readiness, but obliged all the ladies of her court and capital to follow her example. After so many signal tokens of her sincere conversion, the good father set about instructing and preparing her for the next grand festival, which was that of Pentecost, on which she received the sacrament from his hands with the utmost reverence, and, from that time, never gave any other but marks of the most exemplary piety <sup>f</sup>.

*Dedicates  
it to St.  
Anne.*

A.D. 1660.

*Is admitted  
to the sa-  
crament.*

The two following years were chiefly spent in the conversion of the rest of her subjects, and particularly those that inhabited the islands of the Coanza, under her dominion; in which work father John Antony did not meet with a success answerable to his zeal and labour. He returned to court on the news of the prefect's being fallen dangerously ill; but at his arrival, on the last day of March, found him happily recovered. He had not been there many days, before the queen was seized with such a violent distemper, as made them fear, considering her extreme old age, that she could not outlive it; but to their joyful surprise, her strong constitution quickly got the better of the disorder. Their's and her joy were, not long after, augmented by an express they received from Loanda, with the news of the arrival of several Capuchins, designed for the kingdom of Metamba. The same express brought likewise two letters, one from the pope to the queen, and the other from the congregation de Propaganda Fide, directed to the prefect and the rest of the missionaries, importing, that the pope had appointed father

A.D. 1662.

*The queen  
falls sick,  
and re-  
covers.*

<sup>f</sup> *Ibid.* p. 215, & seq.

Antony de Gaeta prefect not only of Metamba but of Angola, an appointment which would oblige him to reside for the future at St. John de Loanda. The queen received the pontiff's letter with tears of joy, and a pleasure she owned, she had never felt before. The departure of the good old prefect, who had been so long the director of her conscience, did indeed deeply afflict her, and she left no means untried to retard it; but duty pleading against her, she insisted upon his granting her two favours, before he left her, namely, to consecrate her new church to St. Anne, and to leave with her an old left-off Capuchin habit, to cover her body after her death, in order, as she said, to obliterate the fantastic notion she had formerly endeavoured to inspire her subjects with, of her being a goddess, or something more than human. The prefect readily complied with this request; and when the habit was brought to her, she ordered her old general, and brother-in-law, to wrap it in a cloth of gold, and lay it up in her wardrobe. The new church was consecrated on the 24th of April, with great solemnity, and, after mass, he preached his farewell sermon, before her, to a numerous audience; then leaving father John Antony, and brother Ignatio, he took his leave, and set out for Loanda.

Soon after his departure, she resolved to receive the pope's letter, lately mentioned, from the hands of father John Antony in the most public manner; and that it should be read, by him, in her new church, before her and the whole court, after divine service. The day appointed for it was the 15th of July following, on which she repaired to the place, at the head of a numerous and brilliant retinue, wearing the letter hanging about her neck in a rich golden purse. The concourse was so great that the church could not contain one half of the people; so that none were admitted but persons of rank. The father, having finished the mass, read the letter at the altar, in the Portuguese language, and the secretary interpreted it in that of the country. The queen, who had stood up all the while it was reading, went towards the altar, and, on her knees, received it from the father. Having kissed it, and sworn afresh upon the gospel to continue obedient to the holy see, she put it into the bag, and returned to her palace among the shouts and acclamations of her subjects. She gave, on that occasion, a magnificent treat to the Portuguese resident, and to all her court, in the two great

*Her great  
feasting  
and joy.*

z *Iid. ibid. p. 244.*

porticos

porticos she had lately built, whilst she herself vouchsafed to eat and be served on that day after the European manner, that is, sitting on a stately elbow-chair, with a high table before her, covered with the finest linen, and with dishes, plates, knives and forks, all of silvergilt. She bestowed some largesses upon her chief officers, released a good number of slaves, and at night appeared at the head of her ladies of honour, when she and they dressed and armed in the Amazonian style, performed a kind of combat, in which that princess, though now above fourscore years of age, behaved with great vigour and activity <sup>b</sup>.

Her life, however, did not prove so long as those fair appearances seemed to promise; though she had the satisfaction to think that she had finished what she had most at heart, and had now nothing left to do but to watch over the execution of her former edicts in favour of Christianity, and against the abominable superstitions of the *Giagas*, and their *singhillos*. One of these pretended conjurers, having been caught in some of his impious rites, she condemned him to be burnt alive. When the good father interceded for his pardon, in hopes of converting him, she readily granted it at his request; but at the same time assured him, that his charitable compassion and endeavours would be ill bestowed; and that she knew the temper of those wretches too well, to think that any thing but the severest punishments could deter them from their impieties. The event did but too plainly convince him of the truth of her observation; he not only tried all the arguments which his zeal could inspire him with, though without success, to convert him, but some time after four or five more of the same fraternity being likewise surprised at their ceremonies, chose to expire in the flames rather than purchase their pardon at the expence of renouncing their sect; so that the old Capuchin was obliged, notwithstanding his humane disposition, to permit, and even approve of such cruel punishments.

Whilst the queen was taken up with promoting the conversion of her subjects in her new capital, the old father obtained leave to go and pursue the same good work with his catechists, in the provinces of her dominions; but before he had gone through many of them, he received expresses upon expresses from her to return, with all speed, to court; so that he was obliged to abandon what he called a hopeful harvest of converts, to come and assist her in

*Her last illness.*

<sup>b</sup> Ibid. p. 247, & seq.



her last sickness. He had left Metamba on the second of September, and made such haste back, that he arrived on the 14th of October, and found her labouring under a violent inflammation in her throat, which hardly permitted her to speak. His presence so far revived her spirits, that she returned his first salutation with some severe reflections on her ambition of being thought a goddess, who now found herself, indeed, a mere sink of filth and corruption. She earnestly intreated him not to forsake her in her extremity, but to continue his charitable offices to her whilst she lived, and, after her death, to see her corpse interred in the garb which the prefect had left with her, and, by all means, not to suffer any of the detestable Giagan rites to be performed at her funeral. She repeated the same injunctions to her first minister of state, named Teudela, who governed the realm during the interregnum, and before the other officers of her court, declaring to them that she appointed the said father John Antony the sole director of her funeral obsequies; and that it was her will, as well as last request, that they should strictly conform to every thing that he should prescribe concerning her interment. The next thing she recommended to them, was the propagation of Christianity, their protecting and encouraging the missionaries and their catechists with all their power, and the enforcement of all her edicts against the impious rites of the Giagas.

*Orders  
concerning  
her inter-  
ment.*

*Exemplary  
death.*

The inflammation having seized her breast and lungs, and some wrong medicine having been applied to it, which made her feel her end approaching, she confessed herself to the father, who went immediately to say mass for her, and returned with the viaticum, which she received with fervent devotion, and soon after the extreme unction, still retaining the perfect use of her senses till the 17th of December, on which she expired, about break of day, in the eighty-second year of her age.

During the latter part of her illness, the prime ministers had ordered all the militia to be in arms, to suppress any tumult or revolt that might be raised, and more especially to prevent the slaves running away, as was usual at such junctures (A). Immediately after her death, they

caused

(A) The flight of the slaves was owing to the barbarous custom of sacrificing hecatombs of human victims, at the funeral obsequies of a monarch. At such times, the poor slaves, dreading to be taken into the unhappy number, used to fly into some other state, or into impenetrable woods, or on inaccessible

caused the palace guard to be doubled, and the gates to be kept shut, that none might go in or out till the council had taken proper measures for proclaiming her successor. They were not long, however, in deliberation; for, early in the morning, on the 19th day, they assembled the people in the great piazza before the palace, and there declared in form that they had elected Donna Barbara, sister to the deceased queen, her successor to the Metambic crown.

*Succeeded  
by her sister  
Barbary.*

She being then present at the assembly of the grandees, was raised to a convenient height above them, to be beheld by all the people, and had the royal bow and arrow, which are the ensigns of royalty, delivered into her hands, with the usual solemnity; yet such was the people's love and affection for the deceased Zingha, that, instead of the usual joyful acclamations to their new queen, nothing was heard but the most hideous outcries and lamentations<sup>2</sup>.

Whilst this ceremony was performing in the piazza, father Antony went to the palace in order to array the deceased in the Capuchin's dress she had so earnestly desired to be interred in, but, to his great surprize, found her already laid out in the great porch, and arrayed in all her regalia, which were of the richest kind, sparkling all over with most costly jewels. He was, however, permitted to order her ladies to clothe her with the monkish frock, and to put her crucifix and beads into her hands. In this manner he hoped she would have lain in state for some days, but, to his farther surprize, she was conveyed to the church that very evening to be interred, under pretence that her funeral retarded the joy of the court for the accession of the new queen. She was accordingly conveyed thither, on the lid of a sumptuous chest or coffin richly covered, in which her corpse was afterwards to be deposited. Her legs and thighs were extended at full length, but the rest of her body was placed in a kind of sitting posture, with her back resting against a favourite page's breast, who continued several hours, motionless, in that situation.

*The queen  
laid in  
state.*

<sup>2</sup> Cavaz. ap. Labat, p. 294, & seq.

accessible mountains, where voured by wild beasts, or died they frequently met with a of hunger and misery. worse fare, and were either de-

The

The procession to the church was pompous, and suitable to her dignity, but after the Romish fashion, with crosses and wax tapers; the good father John Antony walking before the body, which was carried on a bier by twelve of the noblest persons belonging to the fraternity of the Rosary, lately set up in that metropolis. A hundred soldiers attended the corpse, not with their arms, but with their martial music, which was of the most dissonant kind that could be imagined, and these were followed by the militia, with their weapons reversed. The streets were so crowded with people, that the procession could hardly pass along<sup>b</sup>.

When the corpse arrived at the church gate, where the lieutenant-general stood ready to receive it, in order to deliver it up into the hands of her ladies of honour, to be put into the coffer on which it lay, another and a more strange uproar arose; for instead of striving amongst them for the honour of performing this last service to their mistress, the notion of being buried alive with her came so strongly into their minds, that they all fled in a fright, in spite of all the good father and the general could say to undeceive them. Neither could all his eloquence and authority prevail upon any of them. to go down into the grave; the two lay brothers Ignatio and Gabriel were therefore ordered to convey the chest into it, and place it on the altar tomb that had been reared for its reception. These two no sooner came up, than the pages, officers, and courtiers, that had accompanied the funeral, fled out of the church with all possible speed, the same phrenzy having now taken hold of the men as had before seized the women; so that there were none left but the fathers and lay-brothers to fill the grave with earth. As soon as that was done, they all crowded again into the church, and spent the night in it, in deep mourning and lamentations, for the loss of their much-loved sovereign<sup>c</sup>.

Next morning the whole militia was again drawn up, and the new queen assisted at the funeral high mass which was sung for the deceased: immediately after which the martial officers came and told the good old father, that it would be very proper to have a Tomba (B) performed in

<sup>b</sup> Id. *ibid.* p. 296.

<sup>c</sup> Labat, *ibid.* & seq.

(B) That is the name by which they called the old inhuman obsequies to their princes and great men, and in which,



in honour of so great and so beloved a sovereign, as was the late queen; that the soldiery were fully set upon it; and that it would be dangerous to exasperate them by his denial. When he found them determined upon it, he gave his consent, upon condition, that the ceremony should be performed without the shedding of either human or any other blood, and without those immodest dances which composed the most diverting part of the solemnity, to which restriction they agreed; and the soldiers performed their several parts with great exactness.

Many more extraordinary honours were paid by the subjects to that great queen. It was out of respect to her memory that the nobles and people expressed the same high regard and zeal to her sister Barbara, now upon the throne, whom they caused to be inaugurated a second and a third time, with the greatest pomp, and joyful acclamations. She was, indeed, a very zealous Christian, endowed with very amiable qualities, though short of her sister's martial spirit and intrepid courage: she was in the decline of life, almost blind, and incapable of giving strict attention to the concerns of religion and the state; and, what was still worse, had been married to a proud and ill-natured husband, who had dared, even in the late queen's time, to treat her, not with bare contempt only, but with brutish cruelty, though he owed all his fortune and advancement to that generous princess; but now he was pushed by his ambition to grasp at the sole government of affairs, and to deprive her at once of the regal power and dignity, by the most violent and inhuman means, and then to use all his authority to extirpate the Christian religion out of the kingdom, against which he had ever borne an irreconcilable though concealed antipathy; in both which projects, he succeeded but too well, as the sequel will quickly shew.

*Great honours paid to the deceased queen, and her sister Barbara.*

This ungrateful wretch was of no higher extract than the son of a slave. The late queen had conceived such a friendship for him, that she honoured him with her own name Mona Zingha, and raised him, by degrees, to the dignity of her chief general. He had retired from court

*Mona Zingha's extract.*

which, as hath been formerly hinted, they used to sacrifice a vast number of human and other victims, with which they feasted the relations and friend of the deceased. But these, as

well as their lascivious dances, and other heathenish ceremonies, having been expressly forbid by the late queen, were wholly excluded upon this occasion.

in

*Bold demand of the princess Barbara.*

in discontent, perceiving her bent upon establishing the Christian religion; but upon hearing that the marriage of the princess Barbara with Don John, a prince of the blood, was annulled on account of his bigamy, he demanded her for himself in such a haughty manner, as gives reason to suspect, that her fear of his raising some revolt, was the only motive which had forced her to consent. His barbarous usage of that princess, after his marriage to her, had obliged her to take refuge in the royal palace, whence he had the insolence to drag her by force. For this outrage the exasperated queen had well-nigh ordered him to be cut in pieces before her face; but the good father, in hopes of making a convert of him, had, with some difficulty, obtained his pardon and ancient post, though without being able to inspire him with the least favourable sentiment towards Christianity. On the contrary, he invented one of the most hellish accusations against him, in order to destroy both him and his religion. He gave out that the late queen had been poisoned by some favourite European dishes, with which brother Ignatio used to regale her during her last sickness; and attributed his wife's blindness and lameness to some sorilege, or charm, which the convent had made use of against her. He had even persuaded, or rather forced, his queen to consent that some of his singhillos should be sent for, and obliged her to submit to their conjuring arts, to countercharm her distemper.

*The queen reproved for her weakness.*

The father, instead of being intimidated at these false accusations, came boldly to the palace, and publicly blamed her majesty for suffering herself to be seduced by those jugglers. With no less zeal than strength of argument, he convinced her, before the whole court, both of the folly and guilt of giving way to such impious superstitions; threatening, moreover, to leave her dominions, and carry off all the crosses and other religious utensils, from which alone she could receive any help, and abandon her and her subjects to the still worse fate she had reason to expect her apostacy would soon draw upon her and them. To this severe and threatening reproof, the affrighted queen, who had then upon her the countercharms which the singhillos had caused to be made, excused herself in terms to this effect: she observed, that she was a woman, and consequently a weak creature; seated on a tottering throne, deprived of her sight, loaden with age and diseases, and tyrannized over by the man who owed all his fortune to her. All which circumstances, duly weighed, she hoped

would in some measure extenuate her fault. That as to the charms they had forced her to put on, she detested them from her heart, and to convince him of it, she assured him they should be taken off before sun-set, and delivered into his hands to do with them as he should think fit<sup>d</sup>.

She accordingly sent them to the convent by the hands of her secretary; a step which so far exasperated her husband and the whole Giagan sect, that they resolved to massacre all the Capuchins and Europeans, and even the queen herself, rather than suffer them to have such an ascendant over her. They did not, however, proceed to such open violence, but contented themselves with interdicting them the use of their churches, appearing at court, and performing any of their ecclesiastical functions. Mopa Zingha was by this time become so powerful, and had the address to gain so many of the Christian officers, both of the court and army, to his interest, by his extraordinary presents, that he made no scruple to propose to the council the destroying of the new city of St. Mary Metamba, built by the late queen, and, according to the usual practice of ancient times, to build another in its stead, on some other spot: but he had the mortification to hear his proposal rejected by those worthy counsellors, who easily perceived, through that artifice, his real design of destroying all the churches, and of reviving the old Giagan idolatry. He was so much incensed at this repulse, that he immediately retired to his own estate, under pretence of never more meddling with state affairs, but in reality with full design to concert measures for engrossing the whole management of them, by depriving his wife of her life and crown, and seizing upon the throne.

He sent a messenger to her accordingly, desiring her to repair to his house, where he had some important business to communicate; of this summons she sent notice to the council, and to the father Capuchin, who advised her to decline the invitation, on pretext of illness, and the inclemency of the season. At the same time the father proposed, that, in order to make the old general sensible how little they feared either his power or artifices, the queen should repair next day, attended by a strong guard, to the church, to hear mass. This expedient had the desired effect; Mopa Zingha, finding all his measures disconcerted, begged leave to retire to a

*Her husband enraged at it.*

*His designs against them and the queen, disconcerted by the father.*

<sup>d</sup> Cavaz. ubi sup. p. 313, & seq.



neighbouring province, under his government, for the recovery of his health; but here he was again disconcerted; and the council having deliberated upon it, sent him an express prohibition to stir out of Metamba<sup>e</sup>.

*Is sent to  
suppress a  
revolt.*

They were, not long after, however, guilty of a fatal error in sending him, at the head of an army, to suppress a revolt in one of the frontiers; whence being returned victorious, and laden with spoils, including a vast number of slaves, he thought himself strong enough to revive the Giagan rites, and sacrifice a hecatomb to the manes of the late queen. The good father was quickly apprised of his design, and lost no time to inform the council of the preparations that were making for that hellish ceremony. The queen being present, he expressed himself in such zealous and pathetic terms, upon the impiety and dangerous consequences of suffering such inhuman rites, as drew tears from the audience; and an express messenger was dispatched to be more fully informed of the truth. The general easily guessed the meaning of his errand; and fearing the resentment of the queen and council, as well as the severe edicts of the late queen, which were still in force, immediately dispatched another to Metamba, to acquaint the board, that he had no other view in bringing these slaves with him than to send them over to the Portuguese, to whom the realm was in arrears for a great number. This pretence he accompanied with a great many solemn protestations, which would have availed him very little, had he not sent with them some considerable presents, and, in particular, a good quantity of European wine, to give a sanction to his excuse, and stop the mouths of those mercenary counsellors; which it did so effectually, that not a word more was said about his impious design<sup>f</sup>.

He did not forget to send some of it to the good Capuchin, but with a much more villainous view. In order to prevent suspicion, he presented him only with a small quantity to be used at the mass; adding, that if it proved acceptable to him, he would supply him with a larger. The good father, little suspecting his design, was weak enough to drink about two glasses of it; and, in less than a quarter of an hour, felt himself seized with the most violent convulsions in his bowels, and all the other dreadful symptoms of his being poisoned. A strong antidote was immediately administered to him, which helped him to

<sup>e</sup> Cavazzi, ubi supra, p. 332, & seq.

<sup>f</sup> Ibid. 336, & seq.

discharge a great part of the poison; notwithstanding which, he continued several days in such a dismal state, that they did not expect his life. He recovered, however, with great difficulty; but the poison left such a torpor and lowness of spirits upon him, as quite disabled him from his usual functions, and obliged him, though not without extreme regret, to abandon his beloved mission, and to retire to Loanda, leaving only the good old Gabriel, a lay brother, to take care of the convent; for the other missionaries were all dead; but upon his arrival at Loanda, he dispatched father Bernard de Cattiliano, who dying soon after, was succeeded by father John Baptist Salifano.

In the mean time, the queen's distemper daily increasing, her husband gave the father leave not only to attend her, but to perform divine service at the church as usual, and would even sometimes assist at it: for as he aimed at nothing less than the crown, it was not his interest to betray his aversion to Christianity, lest that should obstruct his elevation to it, especially as he had reason to think it could not be long before her death would open him the way to the succession. He was not mistaken in his reckoning, that princess dying soon after, quite worn out with age, disease, and grief, after a short reign, or rather miserable slavery, of about two years and a half, after having given to father Salifano, who had been permitted to attend her all this time, the most lively tokens of repentance for her late apostacy. She was, according to her desire, buried like her sister, in a Capuchin dress, and deposited by her in the church of St. Anne, with suitable ceremony. Her husband lost no time in securing the election, and had so well concerted his measures, that he ascended the throne without difficulty or opposition.

*The queen's disorder augments.*

A.D. 1666.

*Her death and burial.*

The ceremony was scarcely over when he publicly pulled off the mask, and began to exhibit marks both of his abhorrence of Christianity, and of the most confirmed attachment to all the abominable rites of the Giagan sect. That no doubts might remain, he caused five young ladies of the first rank to be buried alive in his wife's grave. He did not venture upon a greater number, though according to the ritual of that accursed sect, her rank would have required at least seventy. But his thirst of blood did not long brook restraint; he sacrificed forty-three of the most considerable persons of the realm, for no other crime than their warm and exemplary zeal for Christianity, and their having been, on that account, very great favourites of the late

*Succeeded by Mona Zingha.*

late queen Zingha, particularly one of her bravest generals, whom he ordered to be burned by a slow fire &c. Some others he caused to be tortured to death, in order to extort from them some accusation against the missionaries, which might afford him a pretence to exterminate them and their disciples.

*Revives  
the Giagan  
rites.*

He had the boldness, some time after these dreadful persecutions, to write to the viceroy of Loanda to notify his election, and at the same time to acquaint him, that he had forsaken the Christian religion, which he had formerly embraced, merely out of complaisance to the queen. He owned that he was now returned to the ancient faith of the Giagas; and, to confirm the truth of it beyond all doubt, ordered all the children that could be found under six years of age, to be inhumanly massacred to their infernal deities. He recalled all the singhillos, and was liberal to them in such a profuse degree, that they became wholly devoted to him, would act any part he set them upon, and were ever promising him a happy issue to all his most bloody enterprizes against the Christians. He caused many of the middling sort to be privately poisoned, and then gave out that their unaccountable deaths were sent as a punishment for having abandoned the ancient religion of their country, to embrace that of a parcel of indigent and famished strangers, who were forced by their extreme misery, to forsake their native country, in quest of a livelihood in the richest provinces of Africa.

*Opposed  
and defeated  
by Don  
John.*

By these and the like impious stratagems he gained such an absolute sway over his Giagan cannibals, that he had almost extirpated Christianity out of his dominions. He had totally ruined the new city of St. Maria de Metamba, together with all its chapels, oratories, and places of devotion, not sparing even the great church of St. Anne, where the late queen, his benefactress, and the princess his wife lay buried, but reduced it all alike into a ruinous heap. He did the same execution through other parts of the kingdom, not only on the staunch Christians, but upon every thing that bore any relation to Christianity; insomuch that he had hardly left a cross standing any where, when Providence was pleased to put a sudden stop to his career, by the means of Don John, lately mentioned, who being now the only lawful, as well as Christian heir to the crown, was the properest person to whom the Christians could have recourse in their pre-



sent desperate state. He readily put himself at their head, and, with what other forces he could procure, took the field against the tyrant, who trusted more in his singhillos, predictions, and conjuring superstitious, than in his army. Don John fell upon him with such bravery and success, that he forced him to fly for refuge into an island in the Coanza, and then caused himself to be proclaimed and acknowledged king <sup>h</sup>.

*Flies into  
an island  
in the  
Coanza.*

He behaved with such prudence and moderation during the few months of his reign, that he gained the hearts not only of all the Christians, who now expected nothing less from him than the restoration of their religion; but of the more civilized part of the Metambans, to whom the tyrant had rendered himself odious on account of the late cruelties he had exercised against them. One of his first cares, after his late success, should have been to pursue and block him up closely in the island in which he had entrenched himself, where he might easily have starved him and his few troops; but he retired too soon, and by that wrong step, afforded him an opportunity of collecting his scattered Gias, and trying his fortune once more. In this second fight Don John was unfortunately defeated and killed, and Mona Zingha had no sooner recovered his dominions than he began to pursue his butcheries with more fury than ever, when, on a sudden, heaven declared itself once more against him, and the brave Don Francisco, son of the deceased Don John, having raised some forces against him, put an end to his life and tyranny in the very next engagement. This young prince, who had been a Christian from his infancy, brought up under the care of the missionaries, being now the only surviving male heir to the throne, was quickly raised to it by the general choice of the council and nobility, and applied his utmost care to the revival of Christianity, and to the repairing of those grievous breaches which the late usurper had made; but with what success our author doth not inform us, who closes his history with the beginning of that monarch's reign <sup>i</sup>.

*Defeats  
and kills  
Don John.*

*Is defeated  
and slain  
by Don  
Francisco.*

Whether, therefore, that king hath kept the peace which was concluded between queen Zingha and the Portuguese, or revived his title to that of Angola, we are nowhere told, but only that these last have maintained themselves in their new conquests to this day, and are still in

<sup>h</sup> Cavaz. ap. Labat. ubi supra, p. 341.  
& seq.

<sup>i</sup> Ibid. p. 353,

possession of the most fertile and richest provinces in that kingdom. We observed before that they had, for form-sake, set up a prince of the royal blood upon the Angolic throne, in opposition to queen Zingha, who was the immediate heiress to it; a step which gave occasion to all the bloody wars which she waged against them with various success, till she was prevailed upon, from religious motives, to desist from her claim, and to live at peace with them.

*The low  
state of  
those titular  
princes.*

As for the titular king, whose name was Aarii, or Oarii, and who kept his residence upon the craggy rocks of Maopongo, they had taken care so to curtail both his power and his dominions, that he was no better than an indigent vassal. His chief grandeur and authority consisted in breeding up vast numbers of peacocks, adorning himself with their feathers, and in his being the sole person who had that privilege; it being forbidden to all his subjects, under pain of perpetual slavery, to do the like, or even to pluck a feather from them<sup>k</sup>. However, as they found him to be a martial and enterprising prince, who would not be long without making some noble attempt to enlarge his scanty boundaries, if not to recover his dominions, they thought fit to engage him in a war against queen Zingha, which would at once remove the scene of operation from their new conquests, and keep him employed against their enemy, instead of attempting any thing for himself.

*He is suc-  
ceeded by  
Ngola Se-  
desio.*

He accordingly acquitted himself with honour and success in this war, so long as they continued supporting him in it, that is, till jealousy made them slacken their succours, through an ill-judged policy, which, as we have seen a little higher, they quickly after found cause to repent. However, he did not long survive his disappointment; upon which they cast their eyes upon another prince of the same family, named Ngola Sedesio: having confined him to the same restrictions, and obliged him to become a Christian, they proclaimed, and invested him with the same mock royalty.

The new king, who liked the Portuguese and their hard terms no better than his predecessor, made it his first and chief care to keep himself in the good graces of queen Zingha, by yearly presents. He stood, indeed, in great need of her protection, as he was no less out of favour with the Portuguese, who, from several of his ac-

<sup>k</sup> La Croix, *Ethiop. lib. iii. cap. 5. sect. 16.* Dapper, & al.

tions, had reason to suppose that he had apostatized, and was become a private enemy both to them and their religion, though he still made outward profession of Christianity. This dissimulation might probably be owing to his fear of disobliging that princess, who was a most zealous patroness of Christianity. But after her husband Mona Zingha, who succeeded her, had declared himself a public enemy to that religion and nation, it is not unlikely that he might be induced to pull off the mask, and not only to return to his old idolatry, but make some attempt to recover his dominions from the Portuguese. This brought a dangerous war upon him by the next year, in which he had the ill fortune to be defeated and taken prisoner. The loss of this battle was soon followed by that of his head, which was put in pickle, and sent from Loanda to Lisbon<sup>1</sup>.

*Apostatizes  
and is  
slain.*

With his death ended the small remains, or rather the mere shew and shadow of the Angolic liberty. The Portuguese being now absolute masters of the whole, or at least of the best provinces of the kingdom, had nothing left to do but to keep them under their subjection, by the most arbitrary imposts and exactions on the ancient native lords, and to rule over those tributary princes with a tyrannic sway, and by such other politic means as we are not likely to be informed of in haste by any of their writers. Those who have hitherto mentioned their conquests in Ethiopia, and other parts of Africa, have endeavoured to palliate the seeming injustice of them, by representing the planting of Christianity amongst them as a more than sufficient amends for the loss of their liberty.

We do not read that the Portuguese government have thought it proper, or perhaps safe, to amuse their Angolic subjects with the specious shew of a mock monarch of their nation, since the death of the revolted Ngola Sedesio above mentioned, but have committed the sole command of the kingdom to the viceroy of Angola and his council; who, whatever decay or disaster may have attended the state of Christianity, for want of a sufficient number of missionaries, or sincerity in their new converts, have taken all due care, we may reasonably suppose, to secure their dominions, and the advantages of their extensive and beneficial commerce in all these parts.

*The government  
of the kingdom  
vested  
in the viceroy.*

<sup>1</sup> La Croix, Dapper, &c. ubi supra.



## C H A P. L.

*The History of the Kingdom of Loango.*

*Loango dis-  
membered  
from the  
kingdom of  
Kongo.*

THE kingdom of Loango, or, as others write it, Loanga, and Looango, is the third and last which was a part of the great kingdom of Kongo, when in its utmost extent; but afterwards dismembered from it, and, like that of Angola, erected into a separate and independent kingdom, under princes of its own. The natives had enjoyed their own monarchs long enough before these African parts were visited by the Europeans, though it is probable that they did not shake off the Kongoesse yoke, nor coalesced into one government, all at once, but gradually, and at some distance of time, under their respective chiefs, who formed a number of small estates, till some one of them grew powerful enough to subdue all the rest<sup>a</sup>. It was formerly called the Land of the Oramas, who were the ancient inhabitants; they are now called Lovangas, and Loangas, from the metropolis of the kingdom Lovango, of which we shall speak in its proper place.

## S E C T. I.

*The Situation, Extent, Limits, Division, &c. of the Kingdom of Loango.*

*Its extent  
from north  
to south.*

THIS kingdom extends along the African coast from Cape St. Catherine, under the 2d degree of south latitude, southwards, to the small river of Lovando Louisia, in the 5th degree of the same, that is the length of three degrees, or one hundred and eighty miles, from north to south, according to the generality of our modern geographers<sup>b</sup>.

*From west  
to east.*

It stretches from west to east, or from Cape Negro on the Ethiopic coast within land, towards the Buchumelean mountains, about three hundred miles. It hath on the north, the countries of the Ambous; on the east, the territories of Pembo Sundi, from the last of which it is parted.

<sup>a</sup> Vide Pigafet. cap. 5. & 11. Jarric, Purch. Relat. lib. vii. cap. 10. La Croix, vol. i. lib. iii. cap. 1. Davity, Dapper, Labat, lib. iii. p. 415, & al. plur.  
<sup>b</sup> Lopez ap. Pigafet. ubi supra.

by the Zaire ; and on the south, the kingdoms of Cacongo and Angoy, and farther eastward the country of the Pangecanguas<sup>c</sup>.

The kingdom is divided into four principal provinces ; *Division.*  
viz. Lovangiri, Lovango-mongo, Chilongo, and Piri.

Lovangiri is watered by abundance of small rivers, very *Lovangiri.*  
fertile and well inhabited. The natives apply themselves chiefly to the cultivation of their grounds, except a small part employed in the weaving of cloths and linen ; notwithstanding which, they are reckoned better soldiers than those of the other three provinces. They live mostly upon fish, though their country produces much the same variety of grain, fruits, and other provisions, and breeds much the same sorts of tame and wild beasts, fowls, &c. that have been described in the two foregoing chapters, and on which we need not therefore dwell any longer. This is the most southern province in the kingdom, and borders upon that of Cacongo.

Loango-mongo lies north-east of Loangiri, and is spacious and fertile, particularly in palm-trees, the oil of *Loango-mongo.*  
which is extracted here in great quantities. The inhabitants are employed in weaving variety of linen and cloths peculiar to those parts ; and, though this is an inland province, many of them are addicted to commerce.

Cylongo, or, as others call it, Chylongo, is a maritime *Cylongo.*  
province, and the largest and most populous of all the four. It is situate between the rivers of Quila on the south, and Combi on the north, which last divides it from Majumba, once a small kingdom of itself, but now a conquered province of this. Its plains are spacious and fertile, and sheltered at a distance by ridges of high mountains. Its inhabitants carry on a very considerable commerce, especially of elephants teeth, though in other respects they are extremely rude and unpolished. On the coast stands the Cabo Negro, or Black Cape, so called by the Portuguese, on account of its dark appearance at a distance, the whole promontory being covered with trees. Within-side of it the sea forms a kind of semi circle, or haven, called by the inhabitants the Road of Majumba, about half a league long from the promontory above mentioned, to the opposite or southern shore, which last lies as low as the other is high. The misfortune is, that the sea, in blustering weather, throws such vast heaps of sand

<sup>c</sup> Vide Pigafet. Labat, La Croix, & al, supra citat.

into the haven, as quite choak up the mouth of the river Combi<sup>d</sup>.

*Piri.*

The last province is Piri, which lies north of Cylongo and Loango-mongo. It is low and flat, yet abounds with variety of fruit and other trees, and is well peopled and cultivated. The inhabitants are naturally peaceable, and scarcely know what war is. They have plenty of cattle and fowl, both wild and tame, and delight much in hunting. The game they take, joined to the milk of their cattle, constitutes their chief food; on which account they are said to occupy more land than those of the other three provinces, and to be the most valued and favoured by their monarchs.

There are abundance of towns and villages in all those provinces, concerning most of which we know little else but their names.

*City of Lo-  
ango de-  
scribed.*

Loango, the metropolis, is situate in the province of Loango-mongo, under the latitude of four degrees and a half south, and about five or six miles from the sea coast. It is called Loango, or Lovango, and Banza Loangiri, but by the natives Borai, or Boori, and is very airy and spacious, as the houses are not contiguous to each other. The streets are wide, and kept very clean, and the sides lined with palm-trees, bananas, and bacavas, which afford a grateful shelter to the houses before, and most of those of the better sort have the same behind, or even quite round, by way of ornament. In the center of the city, facing the royal palace, is a great square, and the palace itself, which forms another square a mile and a half in compass, is surrounded with a palisado of stately palm-trees. It consists of a vast number of houses, among which are those of the king's women, which are large enough to lodge seven or eight of them together, and are about ten in number. These are strictly guarded, none of them being permitted to stir out without express leave either of the king or of one of his chief ministers. These women, we are told, amount to about one hundred and fifty, and are easily distinguished by their ivory bracelets; and if any of them are found faithless, both they and their paramours are sure to be thrown down from the top of a high adjacent mountain, very steep and craggy, so that their bodies are dashed in pieces, before they have reached half-way to the bottom; and this severe punishment is inflicted without mercy<sup>e</sup>.

<sup>d</sup> La Croix, Davity, Dapper, & al. ubi supra. <sup>e</sup> Corneille, La Martiniere, Battel in Purchas Relat. lib. vii. cap. 10.



The houses of the king, his halls of audience, and other offices, are on the west side, facing the plain area above mentioned, in which last he holds his councils of war; and there also feasts his prime officers, and sometimes his whole army. From this plain likewise there runs a wide street, some musket-shots from the place where there is a considerable market kept every day, which begins at ten o'clock, and where there are sold great quantities and variety of palm-cloth, as also provisions, as meal, poultry, fish, wine, corn, and oil. In this market-place is a famous temple and mokisso, or idol, called Mokisso a Loan-go, which was held in great veneration both by the kings and people; Battel was himself one of the conjurers, or priests to that deity.

As to the other houses of this metropolis, they are for the most part oblong, and covered in such a manner, as that the middle part of the top is flat, much after the Italian manner. They have usually three or four rooms, but no stories upon one another. Every house is fenced round with a hedge of palm-twigs, canes, or bulrushes. The furniture of their houses consists in variety of pots and kettles, calabashes, baskets, mats, and benches, on which they lay their cloaths, weapons, and other utensils<sup>f</sup>.

The bay of Loango, though reckoned pretty good, is incommoded, nevertheless, by a bank on the north side of its mouth or entrance, which runs about a half a league along the coast, and hath not above two fathoms and a half of water. The many large rivers that come down from the continent occasion such strong and rapid currents towards the north, during almost the whole year, that it is very difficult to weather them, and gain a southern course. The only months in which they may be stemmed with safety and ease, are January, February, March, and April; all the rest of the year the currents flow so strong that even coasters must keep at least ten or twelve leagues off the land<sup>g</sup>.

The port, or landing place, of Loango, is at the small village of Kanga, two leagues north of the Angra, or bay of Almadias. This port is particularly famous for a mokisso, or idol, of the feminine kind, as its name Gomberi implies. It is placed in a house, or temple, called Munsa Gomberi, and was attended by an old priestess, who,

<sup>f</sup> La Croix, Davity, Dapper, Battel, &c. al.  
Broek Voyag. into India, vol. iv. p. 318.

<sup>g</sup> Vand.

whenever any of her festivals are celebrated, which are commonly done with the music of drums and hard drinking, modulated her voice in such a manner, that the people verily believed it was the statue that spoke<sup>b</sup>.

*Royal tomb.*

About two leagues to the east of Loango is the town of Longeri, where all the kings are interred; the place is surrounded with a kind of palisade of elephants teeth. The other towns and places of note in this kingdom have hardly any thing worth mentioning. Makondo was the usual residence of the queen mother; the king's sisters lived at Sekie and Kate; and Caja or Kaya, where the heir apparent to the crown resided, is situate on the river Kaye, more properly known by the name of Loangolowise. Cholongo, or Kilongo, the capital of the province of its name, is the residence of its manibelo, or governor, who is, in some measure, absolute in it, and after whose death the people may choose another without the king of Loango's leave. It is situate near the cape of Kilongo, about thirty miles south of Majumba, and is, by some authors, called Salage and Salasy: thus much may suffice for the description of the four provinces of Loango Proper.

But as some authors have stretched its limits both on the north and south, and included in them on the south, the kingdoms of Cacongo and Angoy, and on the north side the other four provinces of Majumba, Sette, Camma, and Gobbi, quite up to the cape Lobo Gonzales; all which, perhaps, may have been formerly part of Loango, either by conquest or alliance, though now dismembered from it, our readers will not be displeased if we here insert the little we know concerning them, that may be worth their notice.

*Majumban territories.*

We begin with Majumba, or, as others write it, Mayomba, which is not only dependent upon, but contiguous to, the kingdom of Loango, being severed from it by the river Combi, which forms its bay and that of Loango, already described, and lies in three degrees and a half of south latitude. The territory extends considerably eastwards within land, and hath a salt lake above five leagues in compass, which empties itself into the sea, by some rivulets, about half a league northward of Cape Negro. The town, or rather village, of Majumba extends a considerable length along the coast, but lies so low, that the inhabitants are frequently obliged to remove their habitations at high water, to some of the neighbouring high

<sup>b</sup> Battel ap. Purchas, ubi supra.

lands. The river Banna, which runs on the back of the town, is saltish; the mouth of it affords a good fishery for oysters, and, though shallow there, by reason of the sands thrown into it by the tide, yet is deep and wide enough to carry a great number of canoes, which bring the logwood in great quantities into the port, from the province of Sette, where it grows in abundance, and makes the carriage of it from one to the other much easier and cheaper for the Portuguese and others, who export it from thence<sup>1</sup>; especially as the river extends itself above fifty leagues within land.

*River  
Banna.*

The territory of Majumba is dry and sandy, and produces little or no grain, but affords plenty of bananas and

*Soil and  
produce.*

palm-trees, of the latter of which they make great quantities of excellent wine; and roots of maxondo, which they use instead of bread. The lakes and rivers abound with fish, which is their chief food. The women fetch the oysters out of the Banna above mentioned, in large trays, which, being opened and smoaked, will, like other fish dressed in the same way, continue good for several months. The people are very rude and savage, much given to heathenish and idolatrous superstitions, and they use circumcision like the Abyssinians and Angolans. They have plenty of game, and hunt with their country dogs, about whose necks they are obliged to hang wooden clappers, in order to follow them by the noise, they not being able to bark. This defect makes the Portuguese and other European dogs be so much esteemed, that one of our authors tells us he saw one of them sold for thirty pounds<sup>k</sup>. The government of this province is commonly given to a counsellor of state, called manihomba or homma, who is also prince of Loangiri, and gives no other account to the king of Loango but of the logwood, which pays ten per cent. In other cases, he is in some measure absolute, and a tyrant over the people. Here was likewise formerly a great commerce for elephants teeth, which also brought in a considerable income, but is now dwindled to little or nothing.

*Game.  
Their dogs  
do not bark.*

*Govern-  
ment.*

The people call themselves Marambas, from a setisso, or idol of that name, worshipped all over the country, to which they are all dedicated, from the twelfth year of their age. This idol is always carried before the manihamma, or governor, wherever he goes, and whenever

*Religion.  
Idol Ma-  
ramba.*

<sup>1</sup> De hoc vide De Lisle, La Croix, Dapper, & al. Battel ap. Purchas.

<sup>k</sup> Battel ap. Purchas, ubi supra.



he eats and drinks, the first bit of meat, and the first cup of wine, are always offered to it. The superstitious people likewise consult it upon all occasions, about the success of their hunting, fishery, sickness, journies, and the like; and if any person is supposed to have been taken off by witchcraft, the person or persons suspected are obliged to come and clear themselves before the idol. The ceremony is performed by kneeling and embracing the statue in their arms, and crying out aloud, "I come to be tried before thee of Marambe;" and if the person is guilty, though the fact was committed twenty years ago, the criminal falls down dead upon the spot; if innocent, escapes harmless, and is absolved: and this superstition, we are told by an eye-witness, prevails from Majumba quite to the cape Gonzales<sup>1</sup>.

*Sette province  
abounds  
with log-  
wood.*

Adjoining to the province of Majumba runs from west to east the extensive country of Sette, divided from it only by the river of its name. It was once a kingdom of itself, but hath been reduced under that of Loango. It is chiefly remarkable for the vast quantity of logwood which it produces, and which the inhabitants call Tacool, and traffick in all over the coasts of Angola, Kongo, and Loango, but chiefly with the natives, from whom the Portuguese and Europeans buy it. They have two sorts of it, one called quines, chiefly bought up by the Portuguese, but reckoned of no value in any of those African countries; the other, which is called bisseffe, and is heavier, firmer, and of a deeper red, is that which is most in use among all the blacks along these coasts. The root of it, which they call angansi bisseffe, is still harder, and of a deeper tinge, and more esteemed among them. This country produces likewise variety of fruit and other trees; and their woods, which are of vast extent, swarm with wild beasts, which, with their millet and bananas, constitute the chief food of the inhabitants; they breed likewise some goats, and tame poultry, but in no great quantity.

*Camma  
and Gobbi  
provinces.*

Between the province of Sette and the cape of Lobo Gonzales, are those of Camma and Gobbi, whose inhabitants are perpetually at war with each other, and whose country is intersected with lakes and rivers, which afford plenty of fish, but are infested with sea horses, which do great mischief both on land and water, and particularly to the canoes and other vessels which are continually plying to and fro upon those rivers and marshes. The language,

<sup>1</sup> Battel ap. Purchas, ubi supra.

manners, and customs of both these nations are almost the same with those of Loango. They both allow of polygamy, and are so little tainted with jealousy, that they will compliment their friends, or even strangers that come to them, with the company of one or two of their wives; a practice which is so far from being looked upon as a reproach, that they are as much esteemed and regarded for it by the rest, as if the husband had given them a severe drubbing; which, it seems, is here looked upon as one of the most undoubted marks of conjugal affection. The weapons they use in their wars are the short pike, bow and arrows, sword and dagger; but since the Europeans, especially the Dutch, have been acquainted with these coasts, they have furnished them with fire-arms, gunpowder, and ball, besides utensils for the kitchen, as variety of brass pots and kettles, and several sorts of coarse cloths. The chief town of Gobbi lies about a day's journey from the sea. Their rivers abound with water-elephants and variety of other fish; but the land breeds little else but beasts of prey<sup>m</sup>. The principal commerce with the natives, besides the logwood, consists chiefly in elephants teeth and tails (A), the hair of which is highly valued, and used for several curious purposes, elsewhere mentioned. *Traffick.*

On the south, between Loanga-lowisa and the Zaire, *Kingdom of* are the kingdoms of Cacongo and Angoy; to the former *Cacongo.*

<sup>m</sup> Dapper, La Croix, Battel, & al.

(A) It was in a neighbouring principality to this, on the same coasts, that our countryman Andrew Battel, often quoted in this chapter, came with his negro slaves, to traffick for elephants teeth and tails. The country lies about eight days journey north of Majumba, and a little to the eastward of Cabo Negro, and is called Mani-Kefek. Here, in about a month, he purchased twenty thousand, which he exchanged with the Portuguese for thirty slaves, all his other charges deducted.

During his stay he sent a present of a looking-glass, by one of his negroes, to the mani, or prince; who was so highly delighted with it, that he sent him, in return, four large elephants teeth, by his own servant, with an invitation for any Portuguese or European ship to come into his territory, a little north of Cape Negro, promising to cause fires to be made to direct them to the landing-place, no European nation having as yet frequented those parts (1).

(1) Purchas, ubi supra,

of

*Its ports,  
rivers, and  
soil.*

of them father Morella, a Capuchin missionary, who had seen most of the countries along these coasts, makes no scruple to give by far the preference, whether for commodiousness or profit<sup>a</sup>. It is situate between three considerable sea-ports, much frequented by foreigners; viz. Loango, Cabinda, and Cacongo. The territory of this kingdom is mostly flat, the air wholsomer than that of Kongo or Angola, and the soil more fertile too, by reason of its frequent showers, and the fatness of its black mould, which, in the other kingdoms lately described, is either chalky or sandy. The inhabitants are likewise more polite and civilized, though no less superstitiously addicted to the same heathenish rites than all their neighbours.

*Fertility.*

The chief rivers of this kingdom are the Cacongo, the Kaja, and the Cabinda. The first of these runs four leagues south of the Kaja, and seven to the north of the Cabinda, and is, according to Battel, navigable by boats of ten tons burden. This river runs almost the whole length of the kingdom from east to west, and, after a course of about eighty or ninety miles, falls into the sea, in the fifth degree of south latitude. About four miles south of its mouth is the town, or rather village, of Malembea, where the sea makes a kind of semicircular bay, which affords a convenient road for the vessels that traffick thither, all the coast, between the Cacongo and Zaire, being extremely dangerous, and full of rocks and shelves.

*Government.*

The lands on each side are fertile and delightful, and abound with elephants teeth. Those the Membates, who are situate on the other side of the Zaire, come and fetch, and carry to the port of Pinda, where the Portuguese, or any other Europeans, buy and export them<sup>o</sup>. This country is governed by its own hereditary princes, but under the protection of the kings of Loango<sup>p</sup>. They were formerly vassals to them, but shook off the yoke; though still under their protection, on account of their frequent wars with their neighbours the Mani, or princes of Angoy. Dapper, who gives the natives of Cacongo, the character of cheats, affirming they are treacherous, forsworn, turbulent, yet base and cowardly, adds, that they would stand an indifferent chance from their Angoyan neighbours, if they were not protected by the king of Loango.

<sup>a</sup> Voyag. to Congo and parts adjacent.    <sup>o</sup> Battel, ubi sup. vol. ii. p. 979.    <sup>p</sup> La Croix, vol. iii. lib. ii. sect. vi. Dapper, &c.



They are, however, much addicted to traffick with the Europeans, especially with the Dutch, from whom they purchase a great variety of European goods, as coarse cloths, knit caps, hatchets, and other iron tools, linen, and other commodities, which they exchange for slaves at Kongo, Angola, and other African states.

*Their traffick with the Europeans.*

The last kingdom upon the Loango coast is Angoy, called by some Goy; lying between Cacongo, on the north, and Kongo on the south; severed from the former by the river Cabinda, and from the latter by the Zaire. It is but of small extent either way, as it was formerly only a vassal province of Cacongo, till the mani, or prince, of it, who had married a Portuguese's lady, was persuaded by his father-in-law to erect it into an independent kingdom. The juncture was altogether favourable, as the king of Loango had but just before revolted from the prince of Kongo; and the sovereign of Cacongo, from the king of Loango; so that whilst they were engaged in the controversy with each other, he, without declaring himself on any side, set up for himself. The country is full of woods and thickets, and hath no towns of note except Bomangoy, situate on the north banks of the Zaire. Its chief port is Cabinda, called by others Kapenda and Cubenda, situate on the mouth of the river of its name, about five leagues north of cape Palmerino, on the north side of the Zaire's mouth. The bay lies very commodious for trade, wooding, and watering on the sea-shore. It is flat and marshy in some places, but ascends gradually about three miles within land, and then forms itself into a ridge of hills, which spread lengthwise; on the ascent of these is situate the king's father's town, where he constantly keeps a stock of wood ready cut, to sell to foreign ships at an easy rate. From these wood-piles, south-west along the bay, lie scattered a number of fishermen's huts, on each side of a small fresh-water river, which falls into the bay; and thence they bring all their water in casks. These they roll along the beach to the mouth of the river, which is very shallow. The town, or rather village, of Cabinda stands on the round point of the bay, looking to the westward, and the English factory on the south-west of the road, at some distance, north-east, from the town. But the Portuguese, Dutch, and other Europeans, likewise come to this port for water and provisions.

*The kingdom of Angoy made independent.*

*Its bay.*

The houses, or rather huts, make a wretched appearance, being built of dirt and reeds, and fitter to lodge insects, such as this country swarms with, than human

1 Merolle, ubi sup. p. 651. Battel, apud Purchas, ubi supra.

creatures,

*Soil about  
the bay.*

*Various  
animals.*

*Birds.*

*Oysters.*

creatures. Those which belong to the mani, or prince, and to the maffukka, or receiver of the whites, though built of the same materials, make a somewhat better figure, yet such as would hardly be worth describing but for their peculiar oddness, as the reader may see by the sketch in the margin, which our author hath given us of both (B). The country round the bay is mostly barren, and the people are exceeding lazy. They breed no cattle here except some hogs, but have plenty of poultry, which are sold pretty cheap. The wild beasts swarm so in their woods, that they destroy all the tame kind. Some monkeys have been brought away from thence, which in features and stature much resembled the human species. Civet-cats are here in great plenty, and parrots. The inhabitants follow the fishing trade more than any other, both at sea and in their rivers; and the coasts abound so with oysters, that the sailors quickly load their boats with them, they being found lying in great heaps like small rocks. The natives fish both on the beach and in the bay with drag-nets, which have long canes, fixed at equal distances, instead of corks, to shew when any fish is caught. These nets are made of a peculiar root, which being beaten, becomes flexible like hemp<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>r</sup> Barbot Guinea, Labat, Dapper, & al. Merol. ubi supra, p. 652.

(B) "I was not a little surprised," says our Capuchin, "at the first sight of the mani or governor's house, which, at a distance, appeared to me as a well fortified citadel, encompassed about with walls, and not at all resembling the workmanship of the Negroes. But as you approach it nearer, you find those walls to be no other than rows of thick palisadoes, stuck into the ground five thick, and ruddled up to the top with others of the same thickness. Within there were two broad paths, which split themselves into several lesser ones. The rooms are all hung within with a curious sort of mats, made of oziars of different colours. It seemed there-

fore ridiculous to me," continues he, "that their houses should be built of nothing but straw, oziars, and slates, and yet be defended with brass cannon."

That of maffukka, he describes as follows, "It was built of the same materials, but very large and well contrived; it had several arched rooms, and within each of them two small brass cannon, which, together with two larger ones at the gate, made in all eighteen. These guns they had purchased from the whites, in exchange for slaves, elephants teeth, &c. and the king's palace seemed to me to be not unlike this last (1)."

(1) Merolla's Voyage, English Collect. vol. i. p. 653.

Their

Their dress is much the same with that of the Kongose, and Angolans : that of the better sort is only a piece of cotton thrown over their shoulders, and another girt about their loins, which comes down below the knee, more or less, as they can afford ; whilst the meaner sort content themselves with a short apron ; and these cloaths they purchase in exchange for slaves and elephants teeth. They wear their hair in various forms, according to their quality. The queen, whom our author was admitted to see, had her's shaved close on the crown, and little tufts left all round on the sides. Others wear it plated in different tresses ; all of them are fond of adorning their heads, necks, arms, and legs, with variety of trinkets, amulets and charms, which last they purchase from their juggling priests. They allow of polygamy, as most of these countries do ; and she that is the most beloved hath the rest under her command, but is herself no less liable to be turned out if she be found disloyal. The ladies of the royal blood have the peculiar privilege of chusing their husbands out of any, even of the meanest rank, and have power of life and death over them. Our author, during his abode at Cabinda, saw a young woman sold for a slave to the Portuguese, merely on a bare suspicion of her having been too free with one of those husbands ; though these last are far enough from being intitled to expect the same fidelity from their royal dames. Women of the lower rank are obliged, when they receive a stranger, to admit them for a night or two to their embraces ; though their husbands are, by this species of hospitality, deprived of them all that time.

*Dress.*

*Special  
privileges  
of the royal  
princesses.*

Their religion consists in a variety of superstitious customs, such as anointing their public and domestic idols with a kind of red wood, powdered, on the first day of the new moon, which they worship with particular rites. Thus, if it happens to shine clear and bright, they cry out, "Thus may I renew my life as thou dost !" but if the air is cloudy, they imagine she hath lost her virtue, and forbear their address to her ; and this sort of devotion is more peculiarly observed by the women. On the full moon they all anoint their amulets, which are little horns worn pendant on their necks, with some oil, which their juggling priests give, or rather sell them. We do not read of any victims they sacrifice to their idols, though they consult them commonly about the success of a journey, war, thefts, and such occurrences ; and persons suspected or accused of any crime, are obliged to come and clear themselves

*Superstitious  
rites.*



themselves before them in the manner we have already hinted. One of these idols stands before every door, some about five or six feet high, and others shorter, but all of them clumsily carved \*. We shall only add, that the king of Kongo styles himself still king and lord of all those petty kingdoms, as well as of that of Loango; though neither this, nor any of the rest pay him any tribute or acknowledgment.

In the year 1631 the count of Sonho invaded Angoy with a vast army, and having driven the king out of it, settled his son upon the throne. This son, being no less warlike than his father, invaded Cacongo, plundered his capital, and gained several advantages over him, but without being able to drive him out. And hence the wars we have taken notice of, which those two rival kings frequently waged against each other, that of Cacongo being still assisted by his ally of Laongo, and that of Angoy by the counts of Sonho.

## S E C T. II.

*Of the Climate, Soil, Produce, and Inhabitants, of Loango Proper; their Religion, Laws, Commerce, Money, Dress, Manners, Customs, and Government, &c.*

*Loango described.*

*Climate.*

*Soil.*

*Various products.*

*Useful trees.*

THE climate in this kingdom is nearly as hot as any under the torrid zone, and much hotter than those of Kongo and Angola; nevertheless, we do not find but it is as healthy and pleasant, and its soil as fertile and capable of improvement, as any of them, were not the natives, like all the rest along these coasts, naturally lazy, and too averse to the fatigues of agriculture to plant or sow more than will barely suffice the current wants of each year: whence it frequently happens, that a bad season is followed by a famine, for want of laying up a proper store against such times. They commonly content themselves with bread and fish, and such fruits, greens, and pulse, as the ground naturally produces. They have several sorts of pease and beans, large and small millet, of all which the ground yields them three crops in the year †.

Their palm, banana, and other trees, produce excellent fruits, of which they make agreeable wines, which

† Merol. ubi sup.  
al. ubi sup.

‡ La Croix, Davity, Battel, Dapper, &

they prefer to those that come from Europe. The cotton and pimento trees grow wild, as well as the paradise grain, though the last not in such quantities. The enzanua, alcaudi, and metamba, afford them plenty of materials for cloathing and other uses, as building and covering their houses, and making their ships and smaller vessels. Sugar-canes, cassia, and tobacco, grow here plentifully; but the cocoas, oranges, and lemons, are not so regarded and cultivated by the indolent inhabitants. We say nothing of a great variety of roots, herbs, fruits, grain, and other vegetables, which they make bread of, or use for food. These, with a little more industry, might be produced in such abundance, that there would be little or no danger of depopulation from famine. But besides their aversion to cultivate more ground than serves them from hand to mouth, and which they commit the care of to their wives and slaves, they seem to be naturally made for abstinence; and an European can hardly forbear wondering to see them so contented and merry, singing, smoking, and dancing in the midst of the most pinching penury.

*Singular  
abstinence.*

They have but few cattle of any sort except goats. The oxen which have been brought hither from other parts died so fast, that the dealers were discouraged from all farther attempts of that kind; hogs they have in great plenty, and poultry is so very cheap, that six penny-worth of beads will purchase thirty of them. Pheasants, partridges, and other wild fowl are still in greater abundance, and hardly bear any price. They have a land bird bigger than a swan, and shaped like a heron, whose plumage is white and black, with a bare place on the breast, made so with its bill. This bids fairer to be the true pelican than that which the Portuguese call by that name, which is white, of the size of a goose, and is very common in this kingdom. Among wild beasts, they have the fine zebra, and multitudes of elephants, whose teeth they exchange with the Europeans for iron.

*Scarcity of  
cattle.*

*Plenty of  
poultry.*

*Pelicans.*

*Elephants.*

They catch great quantities of fish on their coast. One way of taking them is by carping irons. They daily watch a large fish of the bigness of a grampus, which comes constantly to feed along shore, and drives whole shoals of the smaller kind before him, which are then easily caught. If this provider chanceth to run himself on shore, the natives immediately set about freeing him, and fairly launch him into the sea again. They call those creatures emboaks, or dogs, and will not suffer any man to scare them. In bays, rivers, and shallow water, they have another odd way of catching them by mats made of rushes, some

*Way of  
fishing.*

of them three hundred yards long. These they set afloat on the surface, with pendant rushes on the sides, which frighten the fish, and make them leap upon the mat, where the men catch them, by drawing it into a narrow compass<sup>c</sup>.

*The natives  
described.*

The natives, who are called Bramas, are tall, stout, well-shaped, and well-behaved, though formerly wild and inhuman cannibals. They use circumcision, and trade chiefly among themselves. They are industrious and vigilant, where gain is to be obtained, yet friendly and generous to one another; very fond of their palm-wine, yet despising that of the grape. They are libidinous to a high degree, and very jealous of their wives. They carry on variety of trades and handicrafts, in the various capacities of weavers, smiths, carpenters, bed-makers, potters, canoe-makers, fishermen, besides traders and merchants: the misfortune is, that the handicraftsmen are so fond of their old ways, and their tools so clumsy and ill-contrived, that their work is very tedious and ill-performed.

*Various  
kinds of  
cloths.*

Their dress is most commonly of their own manufacture, chiefly of cloth, made either of the leaves of the palm or some other tree of the like nature. The young palm-shoots are first carefully cropped and dried, then soaked and softened in palm-wine, and well rubbed with the hand. These, being spun and woven, are made into suits for the better sort, which hang round the body from the girdle down to the feet. They have four sorts of these woven suits; the richest, flowered with divers colours, are peculiar to their monarchs, and such of his nobles as have his express leave to wear them. The second sort is not half so finely spun and wrought as the first, yet doth, at a small distance, make almost as fine a shew, being figured and contrived much after the same manner, that it will require a nice eye to distinguish them, unless by examining them on the wrong side, where the difference is more visible. The two other sorts, which are woven plain, or, at most, only pinked like some of our European stuffs, are still much coarser, and only worn by the plebeians and slaves. These, like the former, hang down only from the girdle to the ankles, and these of the slaves only to the knee. The rest of the body, from the sash to the head, is naked, and only ornamented with trinkets of various sorts and materials, according to the rank of the wearers; some are of gold, silver, brass, or other baser metals, made like a chain, others of ivory, and glass beads of several colours.

<sup>c</sup> La Croix, Davity, Battel, Dapper, & al. ubi sup.



The men are obliged, moreover, to wear the skins of the wild or tame cat; the better sort have them of marten, otter, civet, or other valuable fur; some of them called enkinie, are beautifully spotted, but these are only worn by the king, and such of his court as are authorized by him. Both he and they affect frequently to wear five or six sorts of them, nicely sown together, and stuck with parrots and other fine feathers, of various colours, disposed in form of a rose, and hanging just before their privities, the skirts of the furs being hemmed about with a kind of nice string of elephants hair, to which they hang a number of little bells, which make a strange tinkling at every motion of the body. All these various garments are tied about the middle with a rich girdle going several times about the body, and some of them curiously wrought, of the same materials with their richest cloaths. Those of the better sort wear two of those girdles, one above the other, richly adorned and variegated. They wear about their necks, wrists, and legs, several rounds of beads of coral, ivory, round shells of a beautiful hue, chains of copper, tin, or iron, of a triangular fashion, brought from Europe. Over their shoulders they wear a kind of sack knotted, about three-fourths of a yard long, and with a small hole just big enough to put the hand in; and this serves to carry their calabash, pipes, tobacco, and other provisions. Their heads are covered with a knit cap, which sits close upon it; and, as they never go without arms, every individual has a cutlass, sword, or bow, in his hand.

*Furs worn before their privities.*

The women's dress is much like that of the men, excepting that they wear no girdle, and that their petticoats hang no lower than the knee: those of the richer sort will throw over it a piece of some fine European stuff or linen. The head and upper parts of the body are naked, as well as their legs, except that they have collars, bracelets of coral, and other trinkets, about their necks, arms, and legs. Both sexes wear rings of richer or baser metal, according to their rank, which they look upon as amulets and preservatives; and both colour their bodies all over with a red wood called takeel, ground upon a stone.

*Dress of the women.*

They allow polygamy: a great man has generally ten, twelve, or more wives, and the poorest seldom less than two or three. The consent of the parents, and paying down the price agreed on for the wife, is all the formality

*Their marriages*

\* Dapper, La Croix, Merol. Battel, & al. ubi supra.

and courtship that is used in their marriages. Some are so curious as to buy them at the age of six or seven years, and breed them up to their hand; but the wiser sort of parents will not part with them till they are become marriageable; at which time they set a mark upon them, to testify that they are so (H), which seldom fails of bringing scores of young gallants to them, especially if they are handsome.

*Slavery of  
the wives.*

But the young females have but little encouragement to the matrimonial state, which, besides the mortifying reflection of meeting so many rivals in it, and the violent jealousy of the husband, reduces them to the most melancholy servitude and slavery. We have already hinted, that they alone till and manure the ground, and reap and gather in the harvest. They likewise grind the millet and other grain; make and bake the bread; dress their victuals, make their wines and other liquors, and take care of all the other household affairs. They must stand at a due distance whilst their husbands eat their meals, and pick up their leavings. They must approach him when he comes in with words and gestures expressive of their joy and respect, and speak to him and receive his commands upon their bended knees. They must never appear before him, nor touch any of his victuals all the time their courses continue upon them, nor be seen by the rest of the family without, a string or fillet tied round the head. They are liable to be turned out of doors even upon the least suspicion of infidelity; and, if proved guilty, undergo a severer punishment, though the paramour himself commonly gets off with only some pecuniary fine. Whoever takes in a woman whom the husband hath turned away, is obliged to pay the like fine, or another woman in exchange for *her*. But though this be the slavish state of the Loangosse wives, there is a particular law that obliges the children to follow the condition of their mothers, that is, of continuing slaves if the wife is such, though the father be free; and of being free-born if the mother be

(H) That is, they cause their heads to be shaved close, and only a crown, or garland of hair to be left around it. As for the token of their nubility, it is taken from the first time of their having their natural courses, before which it is reckoned a very high crime for a man to have any connubial converse with them; inasmuch,

that whenever such an irregular intercourse hath happened, the offenders are obliged to appear before the king, who alone hath the power to absolve them, and confess their fault publicly before him, with antic and ridiculous dances and gestures, expressive of their shame and sorrow.

so, though the husband be a slave<sup>b</sup>. None of the chil- *Children*  
 dren are allowed to inherit the father's substance; but *not allowed*  
 the whole goes to his eldest brother or sister, who are ob- *to inherit.*  
 liged to take care of the rest till they are able to provide  
 for themselves, by engaging in some of the trades lately  
 mentioned, or other suitable employments. The children *White*  
 of the natives are born white, but in two days time become *Moors.*  
 as black as their parents. This change often deceived the  
 Portuguese who settled at first in those parts; and having  
 had commerce with the negroe women, vainly imagined  
 the children to be their's. But here are another sort of  
 white children, who, though born of Negro parents, ap-  
 pear, at first sight, as white as our's in Europe, have grey  
 eyes, red or yellow hair, and a complexion not unlike  
 some of our northern people; but there is nothing vivid in  
 their complexion, which resembles a whited wall; whilst  
 their eyes, instead of sparkling, seem to be fixed in their  
 sockets, and hardly appear to have any sight, except by  
 moon or owl light. These the natives look upon as mon-  
 strous, and will hardly allow them to propagate. The  
 children that are born with this infirmity are presented to  
 the king, who causes them to be educated for his purpose  
 in all manner of forcey, and uses them as his wizards and  
 conjurers, so that he is never without some of them about  
 his person, and in his court. They are called Dondos by  
 the natives, and Albinos, or *White Moors*, by the Portu-  
 guese. The learned have exercised their talents in ac-  
 counting for this strange unnatural whiteness, which seems  
 to be nothing but a *lufus naturæ*, incommunicable to their  
 progeny; for we do not find that they produce children  
 of the same colour.

These mongrels not only make part of the king's coun-  
 cil, but are the chief persons employed in all religious af-  
 fairs and superstitious ceremonies. Neither they, nor any  
 of the Loangoese, have any tolerable notion of a Supreme  
 Being. They seem, indeed, to acknowledge one, under  
 the name of Sambian Pongo; but neither pay any adora-  
 tion to him, nor appear to have any idea of his nature or  
 attributes, and consequently neither love, nor fear, nor  
 pray to, him. All their worship and invocations are di-  
 rected to their demons, both domestic and rural, to whom  
 they ascribe the sole power of blessing or of cursing them,  
 of directing the winds, rains, storms, or fine weather,  
 fruitful or unfruitful, healthy or sickly seasons. Some of  
 them preside over the air, others over the earth, a third

<sup>b</sup> La Croix, ubi supra, Dapper, Ogilby, Afric. p. 501.



fort over the sea. Some are of a benevolent, others of a malevolent nature; some their friends and protectors, others their enemies and destroyers; some they consult about future contingencies, as the success of a journey, hunting, fishing, sowing, reaping, war, and the like; others are supposed to discover who hath stolen a lost thing; whether such a deceased friend died of some accidental disease, or was dispatched by some charm; and, if the latter, who is the author of it. These pretended deities they represent in various forms of men, women; or other living creatures; some coarsely carved, others modelled with clay or dirt; some of the small sort they wear in little wooden boxes pendant about their necks, or on y tied to a string; those of the larger sort they set up in their houses, and adorn their heads with feathers of cock pheasants, parrots, and other birds, paint their faces and bodies of divers colours, and hang little bits of linen, or cloth, shells, pieces of iron, and other trinkets, on their bodies, and on the pedestals, which are likewise made of earth, somewhat like our stone mortars, in which the figure stands half in and half out: those they must equally consecrate to the bad as well as to the good demons; without which they would soon incur and feel the effects of their resentment<sup>k</sup>.

*How consecrated.*

The persons consecrated to the service of those deities, are usually well advanced in years, and chosen by the enganga mokisso, or *chief of the magicians*; and the ceremony of his admission is performed before a numerous assembly. By that time it is ended, the candidate begins to look wild, to make wry faces, and to stretch his body into several indecent attitudes, with loud and terrible shrieks, and other frantic actions of a man possessed. He takes fire in his hands, and bites it without burning himself. Some of them are seen to run with desperate swiftness into some desert place, whither he must be followed with beat of drum; there being found covered over with various leaves and other sorts of verdure, he is brought home by his relations, with dances; and, if not really possessed by some demon, acts the part of one so well, that the people really believe him to be so. At his return he is asked to what demon, law, and particular observation, he designs to bind himself, and as soon as he hath named it, a buckle or ring, is fastened round his arm, which he must always wear, to put him in mind of his promise. By this time the spirit or demon, which they

<sup>k</sup> Ogilvy's Afric. Dapper, Davity, La Croix, & al. ubi supra.

suppose to have caused all those various agitations, and to have given the answer above mentioned by the mouth of the possessed, departs out of him, leaving him half-dead. That ring becomes a warrant of his sincerity, and he swears by no other thing but the ring and the demon to which he hath dedicated himself; and so fearful are they of forswearing themselves, that they will dexterously avoid taking that oath, whenever they have no mind to speak the truth, or perform their promise<sup>l</sup>.

The common people have also one or more of these mo- *Little idols.*  
kissos, or small idols. People of higher rank wear them in  
greater numbers. Whenever any person is sick, especially *Of curing*  
the king, or some great man, his friends and domestics *diseases.*  
will spend some days in getting his demon to enter into  
his body, and tell them, by the mouth of the patient,  
why, or for what crime or neglect, he suffers a person  
dedicated to him to be so punished; and, as soon as he  
hath acquainted them with the cause, then they try to  
pacify and bribe him, by fresh gifts and promises, to re-  
store him to his health. As they cannot be persuaded  
that any one can die a natural death, so, if the patient  
chance to die, they will spare neither time, cost, nor  
pains, in running from one of these conjurers to another,  
and from one province to another, sometimes during the  
space of two or three months, till they have found out one  
that can tell them both the cause and author of his death.  
Nothing can be more senseless than the implicit faith with  
which they receive the news, the notions they entertain  
concerning these feigned murders, and the method they  
take to retaliate them upon the pretended offender. They  
imagine that the supposed murdered person, is, by the  
same witchcraft, brought to life again, and spirited away  
into some desert place, where he is made to work hard  
to enrich his murderer, and is fed with meat without salt,  
because one single grain would enable him to take the  
most severe revenge. Some are so extremely weak as to  
imagine that souls may, by the same kind of witchcraft,  
be transported from one country to another, for the same  
ends; and that the natives of Gibbi were much addicted  
to that diabolical commerce<sup>m</sup>.

The Loangoese entertain various notions concerning *Notions*  
the nature of the human soul, but all of them very extrava- *about the*  
gant and stupid. The royal family imagine that the souls *soul.*  
of their deceased relations transmigrate into the bodies of

<sup>l</sup> Ibid. <sup>m</sup> Ogilby, *ibid.* p. 512, & seq. La Croix, *ubi*  
supra, vol. iii. p. 395, & seq. Dapper, & al.

those that are afterwards born in the same family. Others think that the departed souls become demons, heroes, household gods, and guardian spirits, and make them little niches under the roof of the house, where they place their idols, which are commonly about a span long, and offer them some portion of their meat and drink. Others assign them a place of resort under the earth, where they enjoy a new kind of life, in a higher or lower rank, according to their merits whilst embodied. A third sort think souls die with the bodies, unless they be kept alive by the witchcraft of an enemy, in order to render them serviceable to his avarice and interest. They all believe that their mokissos, or, as the Portuguese call them, fetissos, that is the demon to whom they have been dedicated at their birth, have power to inflict punishment, or even death, on those who neglect or break any of those observances to which they have bound themselves. Accordingly, when a man enjoys a good degree of health, and other worldly prosperity, he naturally flatters himself that his mokisso is well satisfied with his service and comportment; but, when matters go otherwise with him, he then thinks it high time to look about him, and to examine in what he has displeased him, and what may be the properest means to regain his favour, or, at least, to ward off the deadly blow. But if one were to ask them what notion they have of the nature and power of those mokissos, or what they mean by that word, they will answer that they understand by it that secret and incomprehensible energy of virtue, which they conceive and find to be lodged in some beings or things, of doing good and evil, and of communicating the knowledge of things past, present, and to come<sup>n</sup>. This, our authors tell us, cannot be termed idolatry, since they neither attribute his power to the Deity, of which they have scarcely any knowledge, nor to any evil spirit or devil, for which they have not so much as a name; so that they give the name of mokisso to every thing in which they observe or suppose this extraordinary power. So that, according to these authors, if they rightly understand, or have had this part of the Loangoese belief rightly explained to them, they, through mistake, ascribe those events to some extraordinary power and virtue of the mokisso, which are either the effect of their imagination, or of natural means and the course of things. Thus if a man hath a good constitution, and lives chaste and regular, they attribute

<sup>n</sup> Dapper, La Croix, & al. ubi supra.



his health to the mokisso, and to the salubrious rules and injunctions prescribed by it, instead of ascribing it to those virtues which of themselves were capable of producing those effects. Ancient tradition and custom, and the example and practice of their princes and great men, whose interest it is to connive at and encourage such superstitions, all contribute to make them lay the whole stress of their good or ill fortune on the efficacy of such extravagant means, as conjuring songs, dances, drummings, and other preposterous ceremonies °.

But such is their extreme ignorance, that though their monarchs only style themselves *mani*, or *lords* of Loango, their subjects not only give them the title of mokissos, but imagine them to be endowed with a kind of supernatural and unlimited power. He can, according to them, not only enrich and impoverish his subjects by one single word, raise destructive wars in the provinces, and send myriads of people to their graves; but, what is still more extraordinary, he can bring down, or withhold rains and storms at his pleasure. He can transform himself into a wild beast, and bend an elephant's tooth, so as to tie it into a knot. His nobles have likewise something of the same extraordinary power in a greater or less degree, according as their dignity is nearer or farther from the regal; according to which they are likewise restricted to a greater or less number of rules and abstinences, but the king to the greatest number of all.

*Supernatural power attributed to their princes and nobles.*

The engangas, or *priests* of this country, all take the title of mokisso; but are distinguished by the names of the mokisso, altar, or temple, which they serve, or, more properly, from the village in which they stand; as Ganga-Therico, Ganga-Baesi-batta, Ganga-Kikokoo, &c. There is a very great number of them in the kingdom, but neither temples, idols, nor ceremonies used in any of them, have any thing worth mentioning. We shall, however, describe one of them, and that, in every respect, the most remarkable of all, by which the reader may form a judgment of the rest.

*Variety of mokissos.*

It is that of Therico, a great village about four leagues northward of Boarye or Boarg, the ancient name of the capital Loango. The temple, which makes a considerable part of the place, is a large building, the pillars of which, as well as the mokisso, have the figure of a man.

*That of Therico.*

° Dapper, La Croix, & al. ubi supra.

The enganga, who is lord of the village, performs the service every morning, by striking a fleece of wool with his staff, and muttering some conjuring words, to which a youth, who assists him, makes regular responses. After which ceremony he addresses his petition to the mokisso, in which he recommends to his care the health and prosperity of the king, the welfare of the country, the fertility of the land, the success of their traffick, and their fishery. At the mention of the king's name, all the people clap their hands aloud, in token of assent and affection. This is all we are told concerning the worship of this mokisso, in which there is little or nothing extravagant, or to be found fault with. But that of some others, especially of that of Boesh-batta, the next in dignity and rank, is performed with a greater and more noisy train of ceremonies and conjurations, with the music of little bells, drums, and other harsh instruments, but so ridiculous and void of sense or meaning, that we shall not disgust the reader with a farther detail <sup>9</sup>.

*Funeral  
obsequies.*

As they have no notion of a future life, except what the soul is forced to by enchantment, for mischievous purposes; so all their mourning and funeral obsequies are calculated merely to express their respect and grief for the loss of their deceased friends. As soon as the person expires, every one begins to howl and cry at a dreadful rate, croud about the dead body, bring it out of the house, and ask what was the cause of his death? whether want of food or other necessaries, or any enchantments, and the like. This loud tumult lasts commonly about two or three hours; during which, some of the relations are busy in washing, combing, shaving, and anointing the deceased with red wood, paring his nails, and getting ready such of his goods as are to be cast into his grave, and others in digging it. Every thing being prepared, they snatch up the corpse, and run away with it, the company following at the same pace; and, when they come to the place, throw the body and effects into the grave with the like precipitation. These commonly consists of the deceased's cloaths, tools, weapons, &c. and, when they are too many for the grave to contain, they hang them upon short posts, stuck into the ground, after having first torn and mangled them, to prevent their being stolen. The mourning lasts six weeks; during which the relations

<sup>9</sup> Dapper Joango, La Croix, ubi supra, p. 403, & seq. Ogilby's Afric. p. 515.

of the deceased meet at the place morning and evening to bewail his death<sup>r</sup>.

If the deceased be a person of rank, they begin, even from the time of his falling sick, to make the strictest enquiries whether his disease be not caused by some enchantment. The engangas, or juggling priests, are consulted about it, and give what answer and advice suit most to their interest or credit; and, if they pronounce him bewitched, all sorts of countercharms are used for his cure. If none of them avail, and the patient die, they use much the same ceremonies with him as they do with those of meaner rank, but with this difference, that they extend the dead body on the floor, in some large chamber, instead of the street, and spend three days instead of three hours, in lamenting his death, trimming his body, and making other preparations for his interment. All this time his male relations continue crying and howling about his corpse; whilst the females keep dancing in another apartment, and singing his panegyrics, setting forth the nobility of his lineage, the greatness of his estate, the number of his friends and enemies, and the state and grandeur in which he lived.

They suffer no strangers to be buried in this country, but oblige them to be conveyed in a boat two miles from the shore, and to be flung into the sea. The occasion of this inhospitable custom, we are told, was this: a certain Portuguese gentleman chanced to die and be buried there. He had not lain above four months in the ground, before a famine, occasioned by want of rain, obliged the inhabitants to consult the mokissos about the cause of it, who were answered, that a Christian had been interred among them, and must be removed, and thrown into the sea, before they could obtain any rain. The people obeyed, and were blessed with a plentiful rain within three days; and ever since that time they have not permitted any Christian to be put into the ground. The commerce of this country consists chiefly in slaves. They likewise sell great quantities of ivory, tin, lead, iron, and copper, which they fetch as far as from the mines of Sundi, that lie on the road to Pombo, almost adjoining to the Abyssinian empire. The smiths and artists in mines go hence in the month of September for the kingdom of Sundi, and being arrived at the mountains where the copper mines are, set their slaves to work in them. They melt the ore on the spot; but as they have not the art of purifying it

*Strangers  
not allowed  
burial.*

*Commerce  
of Loango.*

<sup>r</sup> Dapper, & al. ubi supra.



from other metals, which will intermix with it, even within the bowels of the earth, their copper is neither pure nor valuable. The Europeans have, since the last century, sent some good artists to teach them how to refine it, but the natives are either so indocile or indolent, that they have not reaped any great advantage from their instructions. They are employed at that work until the month of May, at which time they bring with their copper great quantities of elephants teeth, but of a smaller size, and elephants tails, which the Portuguese convey to Loanda San Paulo, where the negroes of that town have the art of weaving that hair into bracelets, collars, girdles, and other ornaments, exceedingly neat and beautiful.

*Commodities exchanged.*

These two last commodities the Loangoese bring from Buka Macla or Boekamela; in exchange for which they carry thither salt, palm-oil, Silesia tickings, cutlasses, looking-glasses, beads, and other such trifling rarities. This traffick might be made much more advantageous, and be extended as far as Pombo, Monza, and the kingdom of Micocco, but for the plundering Giagas that swarm along these parts, and infest all the roads between Loango and Pombo; insomuch, that the masters, not daring to hazard their persons, are obliged to carry it on by their slaves. The Portuguese export likewise from Loango several sorts of cloths, the manufacture of the country, some of which pass for money both there and in other neighbouring kingdoms. As for the ivory trade, it hath been found long since to dwindle every year more and more, whether it be that the elephants are almost exhausted, or that the natives think it too far to fetch it, the journey taking them full three months, there being no other way of bringing those elephants teeth but on the heads of their slaves.

Those Europeans that design to trade to Loango are obliged to obtain a license for it from the king, by dint of rich presents, not only to him, but to his mother, to his queen, to the two intendants of the finances, and to the governor of Majumba. Add to this, that the Loangoese, nor understanding any language but their own, the trader is obliged to hire some of their fishermen, who have commonly a smattering of the Portuguese, to serve for interpreters and brokers.

*Their money.*

Their money is no other than a slight piece of cloth of their own weaving, four of which being sown together, each of the breadth and width of a span and a half, are worth about a penny. These pieces, which the Portuguese call pannos sambes, were in great vogue before the establishing

establishing of the East-India companies, when all the provinces of Holland exchanged them for the copper and elephants teeth which they purchased. But from that time their value is greatly lessened; and seventeen of those libongos, as they are called, are given for a Silesia ticking, and five for a pound of ivory.

We have already hinted that Loango was part of the kingdom of Kongo, and that the mani, or *governors*, of its several provinces, revolted from it, and erected themselves into independent principalities, till one of them grew rich and powerful enough to subdue all the rest, and not only to assume the royal title and dignity, but to strip his old master of several others of his provinces, and to make himself so absolute in his new kingdom, as to be in some measure worshipped as a god by his subjects. They give him the name, or title, of Sambo Pongo, which is that of the *deity*, and address him either for rain or fruitful seasons, with even greater solemnity than other nations use towards, their gods. *Governments.*

Most of the king's chief ministers are likewise appointed mani, or governors, of provinces, the revenues of which enable them to live with greater splendor, and to make a greater figure at court, than they could do with the bare salaries of their respective posts. *His officers of state.*

These monarchs are reckoned very powerful, and capable of bringing vast armies into the field. Their country is, indeed, very narrow towards the sea, but spreads itself wider towards the land, and extends itself very far to the east. All his subjects that are able to bear arms, are enrolled soldiers, and obliged to appear at the usual musters, to perform their respective exercises before him, and to follow him or his generals to the wars, wherever he commands them; yet they live in peace with their neighbours, especially with the kings of Cacongo and Angoy. Their troops are armed with darts, which have pretty large heads of iron, like our halberds, or the ancient Roman javelins. They have a handle about the middle of the staff, by means of which they throw them with great force and justness. They carry also a kind of dagger, resembling in some measure the heads of their darts. Their targets are large enough to cover almost the whole body, and strong enough to repel an arrow or dart, being made of the hard and thick hides of an empacha, a creature somewhat less than an ox, which the Germans call dante. These hides are transported into the kingdoms of Kongo, Angola, and *His strength.*

\* Davity, Dapper, La Croix, Battel, & al.

Loango,

*Laws.*

Loango, by the Portuguese, as we have elsewhere hinted, and there made into jerkins, corselets, and breast-plates.

Their laws are much more gentle than those of the neighbouring states, except in crimes committed against the king's person, dignity, or honour. They never condemn a man to death for theft, but content themselves with obliging the offender to make restitution, and exposing him, with his hands tied behind him to a tree or post, to the sport and laughter of the spectators. If a bankrupt, who hath wronged whole families by borrowing, afterwards absconds or runs away, the creditors have a right to seize on one or more of his near relations, and hold him or them in confinement till the debt is satisfied; but we do not find that any other punishment is provided against the capital debtor, or run-away<sup>t</sup>.

Adultery is only punished with a fine; but this indulgence is so far from extending to the king's wives and concubines, that, if any of them be debauched or suspected to be so, both she and her paramour are condemned to the flames, and burnt alive, without remission, in sight of each other. Those monarchs have commonly a vast number of wives, because they are obliged to keep those of their predecessors as well as their own, insomuch that they amount sometimes to six or seven thousand. These he keeps confined in his seraglio, and only chooses a few of them for his pleasures, and obliges the rest to employ themselves in some sorts of useful work. Should any of these be found pregnant, the crime of incontinence is too fully proved for her to escape the punishment of it, but she must moreover confess her partner in it, which she seldom is prevailed upon to do but by dint of torture, and will sometimes cause an innocent person to share in her dreadful fate, in order to save the beloved paramour. But if she is even barely suspected of inconstancy, both she and her pretended gallant are doomed to the banda's bitter cup; and, if found guilty by that fallacious ordeal (D), both are immediately executed<sup>u</sup>.

<sup>t</sup> Pigafet. *Relat. of Congo*, p. 31. <sup>u</sup> Battel, *Dapper, La Croix*, vol. iii. p. 372. *Ogilby's Afric.* ubi supra.

(D) This is the decoction of a certain root, extremely bitter, astringent, and intoxicating. If the person that drinks the stated dose, is able to stand upright, to stoop and take up the fragments of a broken stick without falling; and afterwards to urinate upon the spot, he or she is acquitted of the crime laid to his or her charge.

Besides



Besides the crimes of rebellion, revolt, high treason, all which are punished with the most severe deaths and confiscation, at the king's pleasure, it is reckoned here a capital and unpardonable offence to see him either eat or drink, though he generally dines and sups in public, and in the presence of a great number of his nobles and attendants. He commonly contents himself with two meals a day, and hath two houses appropriated to that purpose, the one for eating, and the other for drinking. To the first he repairs commonly about ten of the clock, which is his dinner hour, and there finds his victuals ready brought in some sort of baskets, a servant going before them with a little bell, to give notice that the king's table is going to be covered. The high steward hath no sooner laid his meat before him, but he immediately retires, and locks the door after him, leaving neither man nor beast in it to see him eat; his numerous court being waiting all the while in an antichamber, in order to follow him to his drinking-house, to which he usually adjourns as soon as he hath dined.

*Death to  
see the king  
eat or  
drink.*

This last is the grandest and noblest apartment in the whole palace, surrounded with a spacious court, inclosed with palisadoes of palm-trees, it being likewise the place where he administers justice to his subjects. The room is hung with a rich tapestry, about eight feet high, and on the farther end of it is the tial, or *royal throne*, which is made of fine palmetto pillars, white and black, curiously wrought and interwoven in the manner of basket work. The front of the apartment is wide open, to let in the fresh air; and about twenty feet beyond it stands a screen, or partition, quite across, to keep the palm-wine, which he drinks from being seen. On each side of the throne stand two large osier baskets of black and red palmetto, in which the natives tell you the king keeps his lares, or *familiar spirits*, who guard and preserve his person; and other conjuring charms to prolong his life. On each side of him stand his two cup-bearers, one of whom reaches him the cup, when he beckons for it, and the other, who holds two iron rods, not unlike two drumsticks, strikes them together, to give notice that he is going to drink. Upon which all the nobles, both in the hall and out of it, fall down with their faces to the ground, and the cup-bearer, who presents the wine to him, turns his back. In this posture they all continue till notice is given, by the ceasing of the signal, that he hath drank his wine; upon which they immediately get up, and, by their

*His drink-  
ing hall  
described:*

their loud clapping of hands, express their joy and good wishes. It is likewise another mark of respect, whenever any one is allowed to drink in his presence, to turn his back towards him. No one is permitted to drink out of his cup, or to eat of the victuals which he leaves after dinner or supper; but the remainder is carefully gathered up, and buried in the earth\*.

*His banquetting-house, and hall of audience.*

As this drinking-hall is likewise the place where he hears causes, and where matters of the greatest importance are discussed, it often happens that he stays in it till about an hour after sunset; but, if there be nothing of that nature upon the tapis, he commonly retires to his seraglio, and passes the rest of the afternoon with some of his wives. About seven, or soon after, he repairs to his eating-house, where he eats his supper, with the same ceremonies used at dinner, and then adjourns to the banquetting-house, and stays there usually till bed-time, that is, till about nine or ten of the clock, and then retires to his rest, being usually attended by two or three torch-bearers, to light him from one apartment to another.

*Days on which he appears in public.*

He seldom or never stirs out of his palace, but on some grand festival, or solemn occasion, such as receiving an embassy, hunting some mischievous leopard that lurks about his capital, or quelling some revolt. He likewise shews himself abroad on the day in which they begin to plough and sow his own lands, or when his vassals come to pay their usual homage, and yearly tribute. Upon these occasions he publicly repairs to a spacious green that faces his palace, in the center of the city, where is erected a throne of white and black wickers of palm-tree, curiously interwoven, and adorned with other curious embellishments.

*The palace and throne described.*

Close to the back of the throne, is spread a kind of escutcheon, or shield, pendant on a pole, and made up of various pieces of European stuffs, curiously joined, and of different colours. On each side of the throne are set about eight umbrellas, or fans, curiously wrought with the finest of their country thread, and fixed at the ends of long sticks, which run through the center of them. These umbrellas, which the natives call pos and mani, or, according to Battel, pongos, have the form of a hemisphere inverted, and about two yards in diameter; and the staff to which they are fixed is about the thickness of a man's arm, and the length of two or three yards, with a large

\* Battel, La Croix, & al. ubi supra.

tassel, or bushy tuft above, and several others under the half-concave. All these, and several other penfile ornaments, of different materials, being whirled about horizontally with great vehemence, by proper persons appointed for that office, raise a kind of artificial breeze, very refreshing and delightful to all that are near them <sup>r</sup>.

The ground before the throne is covered with a large carpet, or cloth of quilted leaves, neatly sewed, about forty yards long, and twenty broad, on which none but the king or his children may set their feet, but, round about it, there is room enough left for two or three persons to pass; and beyond that all the nobles and officers of the household are seated cross-legged around, some on the ground, and others on cushions, or carpets, each holding in his hand, and waving about, a buffalo's tail. The servants in great numbers surround their masters on the outside, all seated in the same posture; and, at proper places and distances, are placed the musicians, or players upon various instruments, which not only give a very agreeable sound, but add likewise an air of grandeur to the solemnity. Before the king's carpet above mentioned sit a number of dwarfs, with their backs towards the throne. These are by the natives called bakke bakke, by some mimos, and by Europeans pigmies. They are said to be but half a man's stature, but thick and squat, and to be chiefly employed in killing elephants, which are in great plenty in their country, which lies near a month's journey north-east of Loango, on the road to Micocco. Those that are brought from thence are generally chosen for their deformity, especially the disproportionate largeness of their heads <sup>z</sup>. Their cloathing is suited to their appearance, being no other than the skins of beasts tied about their middle. These the king causes to be intermixed, by way of contrast, with a number of white Moors, and both together make a very grotesque figure, with their antic gesticulations.

Before the running passage that leads to the royal throne, stand three or four officers, with iron instruments in their hands, not unlike in shape and sound to those bells which our country people hang about cows and sheep's necks, the noise of which is to command silence; and in the city, where the same men likewise officiate as criers, they proclaim the king's orders, and notify things either lost or found, by the sound of the same instruments.

*Bells to give the signal to discover theft.*

<sup>r</sup> Ogilby, ubi supra. La Croix, ubi supra. Dapper, & al.  
<sup>z</sup> Dapper, La Croix, & al. ubi supra.



As soon as the king is seated on his throne, the music playing all the while, a set of officers begin a brawl, or round dance, called kilomba, around the royal carpet, in which they toss their arms about, backwards and forwards, and show all possible activity with their bodies; and when any of them hath been so happy as please his majesty by his performance, of which notice is given to him, he immediately draws nearer to the throne, and after rolling himself several times on the sand, to testify his gratitude and subjection, he is allowed to clap his hands upon his majesty's knees, and thrust his head into his bosom. The nobles have the privilege of saluting the king in the former manner, and in approaching nearer and nearer to his person, taking several large steps, or bounds in the air, backwards and forwards; and as these have their separate seats on each side of the throne, they cause their own vassals, who attend them on these occasions, to perform the ceremony to them, this is called the kilomba, or *leaping salute*, and is always used upon the grand occasions above mentioned, and particularly when the king's vassals come to pay him their homage and tribute<sup>a</sup>.

*Tilling of  
his land.*

The next grand solemnity is called the seeding-time, and falls always on the 4th of January, when men and their wives appear before him in the same state, in order to till and sow his lands. The men appear in arms, whilst the women are busied in breaking the ground, not, indeed, to assist him in the work, but to protect them from insults, and to prevent their quarrelling one with another. This is a service to which they must all submit, and from which none can absent themselves without incurring some pecuniary penalty, and to which the king himself repairs in person, about three in the afternoon. In the evening they are all invited to sup at his charge; and this is esteemed a grand festival among them. In the like manner is every vassal obliged to send his wives to till the land of his respective lord; and when they have performed this last service, they are at liberty to go and work for themselves on what waste piece of ground they like best; for all the rest of the lands are held in common: and when any one hath begun to cultivate one spot, it is not lawful for another to interfere with him in it.

When an ambassador is admitted to audience, or a nobleman or gentleman comes to present a suit or complaint, he must open the ceremony with the clapping of

<sup>a</sup> Ogilby, ubi supra, p. 503.

hands two or three times; and when answered in the same manner, he cries aloud, *empo lausan bian pongo*; that is, *hearken for God's sake*, or, *in God's name*: to which he is answered, *tiesambie zingha*; that is, *long live God*; which is as much as to say that he is permitted to speak; then he explains his case, beginning his speech, or request, with the word *wag*, and ending with *in mama wag*, or, *I here conclude*. If any person present hath aught to object against it, he is allowed to do it, but must begin and end with the same words; which, we are told, are used in all their pleadings, warrants, and orders from the king<sup>b</sup>.

The last occasion on which the king shews himself in public, is on the hunting of some leopard within the neighbourhood of his capital. These creatures being numerous and very hurtful in these parts, the noblemen are allowed to summon all their vassals to hunt and destroy them; and when any of them hath destroyed one of those animals, he gives notice of it to the king, by bringing the tail of it to Loango, and hanging it on a palmetto pole before the royal palace: but if any of those vermin are discovered within the neighbourhood of that capital, the king, upon the first notice of it, orders all the inhabitants, by beat of drum and sound of trumpet, to appear in arms, and to accompany him to the place where the creature is lodged. If it be too far for him to walk to it, he is carried thither in his wicker chair, borne upon four men's shoulders. When they are come to the leopard's den, or to the wood where his haunt is, the people surround and beset the avenues, armed with their bows and javelins, and lay their traps, or spread their nets, to catch it alive. Then they sound their trumpets; beating their drums, and making a most hideous din to dislodge it, till the affrighted creature, unable to break its way through volleys of darts and arrows, is forced into the net or trap, where, in the presence of the prince, every one strives to dispatch it. He then orders it to be slayed by one of his officers, and the skin to be carried to his palace, the body being opened, and the gall taken out; the former is buried very deep in a hole dug for that purpose, upon the spot; and the latter, which is reckoned among them one of the strongest poisons, is cut up and flung into the next river, to prevent an ill use being made of it. The skin is

*His hunting of the leopard.*

<sup>b</sup> Dapper Loango, La Croix, ubi supra, p. 385. Ogilby, & al.

carried in triumph by the huntsmen to the palace, where the ceremony is closed with singing, dancing, and a variety of other pastimes.

*Funeral  
obsequies of  
the king.*

Their funeral obsequies are performed with great pomp, and much after the same manner we have observed among those neighbouring kingdoms that have not been converted to Christianity; but with this manifest difference, however, at least of later years, that they have left off that inhuman custom of burying wives, relations, domestics, and slaves, alive with them: instead of which, they surround the funeral seat, on which the corpse is placed, with little pictures of clay, wood, wax, and other materials, to serve them as their attendants into the other world; yet some slaves, we are told, they still slaughter, and bury in the same or some adjacent vault. These vaults are made large enough to contain, besides the corpse, which is always arrayed in the most pompous manner, a great number of other utensils and household lumber, as pots, kettles, pans, pitchers, cups, cloaths, and linen. These slaves are buried with their masters, not only to attend them in the other life, but likewise to bear witness, when they come to appear before the great monarch, or God of the other world, how they have lived and behaved in this; which, if true, though it confirms what we have before observed of their obscure and imperfect idea of the Supreme-Being, yet plainly confutes what some authors have affirmed of their disbelief of a future state.

*The order  
of the suc-  
cession.*

The inheritance goes not to the children, but to the elder brother or elder sister's children; and the same rule is observed in the succession to the crown: to prevent confusion and disputes, those who claim it have particular towns or villages assigned for them to live in, nearer or farther from Loango, according to their being farther from, or nearer to, the succession: they have likewise their titles from those towns: thus, the next heir to the crown is called Mani-kay, from the town of that name, about five or six miles north-west of that capital; the next to him is called Mani-bokke, and lives at that town, which is between fifteen and sixteen miles farther up the country; Mani-sallaga, or Salag, the third in rank, lives at Salag, thirty-five miles from Loango; Mani-kat, the fourth in course, lives at Kat, a village about fifty miles; and Mani-inyami, the fifth and last, at a hamlet southwards of that capital, and near the kingdom of Cacongo: so that when the prince on the throne dies, Mani-kay, who succeeds him, removes to Loango, and



and the other four remove one stage nearer to it, according to their rank, and a new one is nominated to succeed Mani-inyami. But though Mani-kay enters into his government immediately after the demise of his predecessor, he commonly stays in his old residence about six months longer, that is, till the funeral ceremonies of the other's interment and mourning are ended, before he makes his public appearance at court<sup>c</sup>.

We know little more of the history of those monarchs, than what have been already said either in this section, or in the two preceding chapters, relating to those of Kongo and Angola, against whom, especially the former, they continued for some time in a state of war, after they had shaken off their yoke, and made themselves absolutely independent, in the manner we have already related. It was not long, however, before they found means to reconcile them to that mortifying step, and to prevail on them to live in peace and amity with them; and in that friendly state they were in, when our Portuguese historian landed first in these parts. Since which time we do not meet with any hostile transactions that have passed between them; but, on the contrary, have frequently found them strictly allied against some other neighbouring princes to the eastward of their dominions, and often employed in suppressing the Giagas, those constant pests of their mutual traffick, and common invaders, and perpetual terror of every realm along these coasts.

This beneficial commerce, which hath been still carried on between the subjects of these two crowns, so closely combined the inhabitants of both, that it was once firmly hoped that the conversion of the one to Christianity would be soon followed by that of the other. The Loangoese in conversing with the Kongoese converts, expressed an earnest desire of having some proper missionaries, who might come and instruct them in that faith, for which they professed a much greater liking by what they had observed in their neighbours, than they now had for their old idolatrous and heathenish worship. What is still more surprising, their own monarchs, respected and idolized as they are by their subjects, and conceited of their imaginary power, wisdom, and greatness, yet condescended to make several pressing instances to the kings of Kongo and Angola, as well as to the Portuguese vice-

*The history of Loango unknown to us.*

*Trade obstructed by the Gallas.*

<sup>c</sup> Battel ap. Purchas, vol. ii. p. 383. Ogilby, ubi sup. p. 503, & seq.

*The cause  
of the scar-  
city of mis-  
sionaries.*

roy at Loanda, to the same intent, and to promise the greatest encouragement to any missionaries that should come to preach the gospel in their dominions<sup>d</sup>. They even offered a free and advantageous trade into their country, not to the Portuguese only, but to any European nation that would send them Christian preachers of any order or denomination, yet never could obtain the satisfaction of entertaining any of those so much longed-for and desired guests; a disappointment owing to the great scarcity there was of such holy men in both these kingdoms, the occasion of which we have already sufficiently hinted, as namely, the small number that are sent thither from Europe, and the terrible havoc which the inclemency of the weather, change of diet and climate, and constant fatigues, make among those few that arrive. We are told by one of the latest writers that came from thence, that throughout the whole kingdom of Kongo, which is mostly Christian, and in alliance with the Portuguese, there were not above six Capuchins, exclusive of those that are settled at the cathedral of St. Salvadore to perform the priestly functions through that vast extent of territory<sup>e</sup>.

### S E C T. III.

*An Account of a new Tribe of Giagas, who penetrated into the Kingdoms of Kongo, Loango, &c. thence, through the Heart of Africa, quite to the Eastern Coast.*

*Their uncertain origin.*

**W**HAT part of Africa this strange and barbarous nation came originally from, is variously conjectured. The most probable opinion is that which brings them down from the empire of Monoemugi, and more particularly from the neighbourhood of the two famed springs of two great rivers which have been vulgarly mistaken for the Nile and Zaire, though more probably, perhaps, near that of the latter (A). This opinion is founded

<sup>d</sup> Odoard. Lopez apud Pigafet, lib. i. cap. 5. Dapper, La Croix, & al. supra citat. <sup>e</sup> Michael Angelo's voyage to Kongo 1666, ap. Labat, ubi sup. vol. v. p. 174, & seq.

(A) Odoard Lopez is the first European writer who hath mentioned these Giagas, and tells us that they had that name given to them by the Kongoese; but that they, in their own language, call themselves Agag, and Agagi. But Battel,

founded on the etymology of their ancient names Gialaſi, and Lingaggiaghi, which implies people that live near ſome ſpring heads<sup>a</sup>.

But whatever part of Africa they originally came from, they ſeem to have ſettled at firſt about the kingdom of Anziko, which lies many days journey north from that of Loango, and to have ſpread themſelves about thoſe ſpacious waſtes that lie between them. For there we find them ſtill joined and intermixed with the Anzikans, and ſubject to the ſame monarch, though they differ greatly from them in their manners, cuſtoms, and religion. From thence they are ſuppoſed to have ſpread themſelves, by degrees, along the eaſtern frontiers of Loango, Kongo, and Angola, thence eaſtward unto the kingdom of Metamba, of which they made themſelves maſters, and ſouthward as far as that of Benguela. From all theſe new ſettlements they have perpetually harraſſed their neighbours on all ſides with their inroads and ravages ever ſince<sup>b</sup>.

*Their ir-  
ruption in-  
to Kongo.*

They have neither towns nor houſes, nor any ſettled habitation, but, like the wild Arabs, roam from place to place in tents, and change their dwelling as their fancy or occaſions lead them. They neither ſow nor plant, but ſeize upon every thing that comes in their way, and live altogether upon plunder and robbery. They are tall, luſty, and ſtrong, nimble and ſwift of foot, and climb the ſteep mountains, and craggy rocks, like the wild goats. Their women are ſtout, well ſhaped, fertile, warlike, and active; and both ſexes are ſo intrepid, that no enterprize is thought too hard or dangerous for them to venture upon; and whenever any plunder or prey comes in their way, they ruſh upon it at all hazards, and with a fearleſs un-

*Their wan-  
dering and  
plundering  
life.*

<sup>a</sup> Pigafet. lib. ii. cap. 5. Cavaz. apud Labat, lib. ii. cap. 7. p. 90. <sup>b</sup> Vide Pigafet. ubi ſupra. Dapper, La Croix, Labat, & al. ſupra citat.

Battel, who had a much better opportunity to inform himſelf of their original name, as he lived under them about ſixteen months, tells us that they call themſelves Imbangolas; which is the name, in all probability, of the Imbii and Gallas, two nations, or perhaps tribes, equally barbarous in their man-  
ners, and infamous all over theſe parts of Africa for their ravages and eating the fleſh of their captives. Theſe had been long ſettled in that part of Abyſſinia, near the heads of the Nile, whence they made frequent incurſions into that empire, and committed the moſt dreadful ravages.



concern for their lives. They pique themselves on their inhumanity, and make no scruple to eat their relations, and even their own children, for want of other food; though, for the most part, they take such care in this particular, that it must be owing to some great misfortune or unforeseen accident, if their shambles are not stored with the flesh of their unhappy captives<sup>c</sup>. The first chief under whom they invaded and made themselves masters of a great part of the vast empire of Kongo, was called Zimbo, who was afterwards succeeded by a virago, no less warlike and cruel, named Tembandumba, who gave them a collection of the most inhuman and execrable laws, which are still extant amongst them. And from these two sprung those famous leaders Kassanghi, Kalanga, and several other Giagan princes, of whom we shall have occasion to speak in the sequel.

*Zimbo their  
first leader.*

*Their suc-  
cess and  
dreadful  
butcheries.*

Zimbo first appeared at the head of a numerous body of Musimbi, who were either his subjects, or had been assembled from other wilds of Africa, to attend him on his expedition, in hopes of meeting with better fare, and enriching themselves by the plunder of those nations through which he engaged to lead them, as to certain victory and wealth. They readily accepted his offers; and flocked to him in such numbers, that he soon saw himself at the head of a numerous army. He brought likewise with him a favourite heroine, of the same name with the virago above mentioned, who served him as a concubine and a counsellor; with these he penetrated, without any considerable opposition, almost to the very center of the Kongoese empire, committing the most dreadful ravages, and leaving nothing behind but desolation and ruin. What was still more dreadful, these hungry wretches, accustomed to feed on human flesh, made no less horrid havock among the unhappy Ethiopians who fell into their hands, and whom they wantonly put to the most excruciating deaths, merely to give a higher relish to their flesh; though they were naturally such monsters of beastliness, that when that failed them, they as greedily devoured the most loathsome creatures, reptiles, insects of all kinds, and even any stinking and half-corrupted carrion, that fell in their way. Whenever these failed, they made no difficulty to attack the most fierce and

<sup>c</sup> Cavaz. apud Labat, lib. ii. cap. 7. Pigafet. ubi supra. See also before, p. 12, & seq.

cruel wild beaſts, ſuch as lions, tygers, and leopards; but as theſe creatures are naturally affrighted at multitudes, and will convey themſelves into the thickeſt forests for ſafety, whence there is no poſſibility of driving them out, they had recourſe to ſetting the whole wood on fire, and waiting for their coming out, in order either to diſpatch them with their weapons, or to penetrate into it, and feed upon their half-roaſted carcaſes. So that they ſeldom left any territory, before they had reduced it to a mere wilderneſs<sup>d</sup>.

Theſe horrid deſtroyments brought daily new recruits to his army; the unhappy Kongoeſe flocking to him in ſhoals, in hopes to preſerve themſelves from the famine which that ſpread where-ever it paſſed; and Zimbo grew every day more and more powerful, till having one day muſtered all his forces, and finding them too numerous and unwieldy to continue longer in one body, he thought proper to divide them into ſeveral corps. Having ſet ſome of his moſt intrepid officers over the different diviſions, he diſperſed them into ſeveral parts of Ethiopia. One of them, named Quizzuva, a man no leſs brutiſh than martial, embellished the floor, walls, and cincture of his houſe and tomba, with the ſkulls and bones of the human bodies which had been ſerved at his table, and had the insolence to go and attack the Portuguese at one of their ſtrengths named Teto, in the kingdom of Monoe-mugi. But he there met with the fortune he had juſtly deſerved, being totally defeated and killed, with a vaſt number of his Mombi, and the reſt either put to flight or taken priſoners.

*Increase in  
number and  
cruelty.*

*Defeated  
by the Por-  
tugueſe.*

Zimbo, in order to revenge this diſaſter, marched with all poſſible ſpeed to the fort with a freſh ſupply of forces, engaged the Portuguese commander again, and, after an obſtinate ſtruggle on both ſides, defeated and killed him, and made a dreadful ſlaughter among the reſt of his forces. Thoſe whom he took priſoners underwent a much crueller fate; for theſe he cauſed to be put to the moſt torturing deaths, particularly their chaplain, a Dominican friar, whom he had obſerved to be more than commonly buſy in encouraging the ſoldiers to fight. All their heads were ordered to be ſtuck upon lances, and carried away as trophies, together with all the church veſtments, Zimbo himſelf marching at their head, arrayed in a prieſtly ha-

*Zimbo's  
revenge on  
them.*

<sup>d</sup> Cavazzi apud Labat, ubi ſupra, p 93, & ſeq.

bit, and carrying a chalice in his hand, in derision of their religion <sup>c</sup>.

*Descent on  
the island  
of Quiloa.*

Flushed with this success, he made a descent upon the island of Quiloa (B), formerly in the hands of the Portuguese, but now possessed by the Mohammedan Moors, made himself master of some part of it, in which he put three thousand inhabitants to the sword, whose bodies he gave to his troops to glut themselves with, together with the plunder. He took the rest prisoners, made slaves of some of them, and the others he ordered to be sacrificed to his idols, and among these last the traitor who had assisted him to surprise the island, of which he himself was an inhabitant. But first, to shew his abhorrence of his treachery, he caused him to be tortured in the most exquisite manner; and then appointed him to be the first victim to be offered to his gods.

*Descent on  
Mozam-  
bico.*

He made much the same successful attempt upon that of Mosambico, on the south of Quiloa; where both the inhabitants and Portuguese that were settled among them, being alarmed at his approach, and much more at his horrid cruelties, had unanimously resolved to oppose his descent at the hazard of their lives. They were moreover encouraged to this brave resolution by the expectation they were in of the European fleet, which was coming to their relief; but had the misfortune to see it dispersed by a dreadful storm, which intervened, and themselves, as it were, abandoned by Providence to that inexorable monster of cruelty, who quickly landed with his cannibals, and did not stir from it till they had stripped it of every thing that was valuable, and of every living, especially human, creature, that could glut their ravenous jaws <sup>f</sup>.

*Attempt  
upon Me-  
linda.*

His next attempt was upon the kingdom of Melinda. At the first news of his approach, the inhabitants, were

<sup>c</sup> Cavaz. *ibid.* p. 95, & seq.

<sup>f</sup> *Idem ibid.* p. 98, & seq.

(B) This island is situate on the eastern side of Africa, on the coast of Zanguebar, near the mouths of the rivers Cuabo and Kifima, under the eighth degree and a half of south latitude. The Portuguese, who first discovered it, built a strong fortress upon it, and had set-

tled a considerable factory in it, but abandoned the one, and razed the other, by order of their king, and settled themselves at Melinda and Mosambico, on the same coast, which were more convenient for their commerce.

consulting



conſulting how to ſave their lives and valuable effects, by betaking themſelves to their woods and deſerts. They were, however, diſſuaded from this ſtep by their generous monarch, who repreſented in the ſtrongeſt terms, how ſhameful a thing it would be for ſo brave a nation to abandon their country to a ſet of banditti and robbers, who had neither religion, honour, nor humanity; pro-teſting at the ſame time, that whatever they might reſolve upon, with regard to their own ſafety, he was fully determined to meet and engage them, and to defend his country and ſubjects to the laſt drop of his blood, againſt thoſe barbarians and inhuman invaders, and truſt to the Divine Providence for his aſſiſtance in ſo juſt a cauſe. By theſe words his people were ſo effectually encouraged, that they reſolved, one and all, to ſtand by him to the laſt man; and the king, marched out with them to meet the enemy at ſome diſtance from his capital.

Zimbo advanced at the head of his victorious cannibals, laden with the ſpoil of Quiloa, Moſambico, and other places, and engaged the Melindans with his uſual fierce-  
neſs and aſſurance of ſucceſs. The engagement was ob-  
ſtinate and bloody, and laſted ſeveral hours. At length the ſavages began to give way, and betake themſelves to flight, in ſpight of their general's endeavours to keep them together. The king rightly deeming ſuch an in- human race unworthy of mercy, ordered his men to pur- ſue and ſlay all they could come at; which they did with ſuch readineſs and bravery, that very few, except ſome of the moſt nimble-footed, eſcaped their fury. A dread- ful maſſacre was made of all the reſt, and an immense ſpoil was found in their camp. Zimbo had the good fortune to eſcape with a ſmall number of his braveſt troops, to the woods, where he ſtayed to collect the poor remains of his other fugitives.

This dreadful and unexpected blow, made him reſolve upon a new project, which was to make a tour round the coaſts of Africa, in which there was a proſpect of daily increaſing his army with new volunteers amongſt thoſe ſavages, and enriching himſelf with ſuch ſpoils as ſhould fall in his way. He accordingly ſet out, and directed his courſe ſouthwards, along the eaſtern coaſts, till he arrived at the Cape of Good Hope, without meet- ing with any oppoſition or diſaſter; and, as he found his army to augment, he divided them, for the greater conve-

z Cavaz. apud Labat, ubi ſupra, p. 99, & ſeq.

niency of living and plundering, into several columns, which he however forbade to separate themselves so far, but that they might, upon any emergency, be able to reunite.

*Fixes his  
camp at  
Kilomba,  
where he  
dies.*

From the Cape of Good Hope, he directed his march to the northward, till he came to the great river Cuneva, which flows southwards from the Sallan mountains, in Upper Bemba, and discharges itself into the Ethiopic sea, about the 17th deg. of south latitude, where he settled himself between that river and the sea-coasts. Here he began to fix his resting-place, and to build some wretched huts for his men, in form of a camp, or large village, which he called, in their language, Kilombo, distributing them into several bodies, under proper commanders, and reserving to himself the supreme command over the whole. He was, however, of too restless a temper to continue long in that quiet situation; his ambitious mind was ever hatching some new exploit; to complete which he soon set about increasing his army, and making other preparations for a favourite expedition he had been projecting, when death put an unexpected end to all his designs, how, and by what means, we are not told, and carried off soon after likewise his favourite concubine Temban-dumba, the faithful companion of all his travels. The surviving commanders, not caring to submit, or become dependant on any other chief, quickly agreed to break up their community, and each took upon him the chief command of his own troops. Some of them moved off in quest of new settlements; and the rest staid in the old quarters, which had been assigned to them, and from thence sprang their several tribes, and diversity of governments we meet with in most parts of Africa.

*Dongii, the  
father of  
Temban-  
dumba, set-  
tles at Gan-  
gholla, and  
dies.*

Among their chiefs that separated themselves from the rest, was one Dongii, particularly famed among the Giagas for being the father of that infernal virago, hinted at in the beginning of this section; who gave them a number of diabolical laws, by which they became more known by the name of a sect, than of a nation. As there is little to be met with worth notice in the history of any of the other tribes, we shall confine ourselves to the history, reign, religion, and other curious particulars only, which are related of that surprising woman, if such a monster could deserve that name.

Temban-dumba was born at Kilombo, the camp which Zimbo chose for his last retreat, and had that name given her in compliment to his favourite concubine. After  
their

their decease, Dongii her father removed with his small army to the province of Ganghella, or Ganguella, situate on the south side of the kingdom of Metamba, where dying soon after, his wife Mussaza, a bold masculine woman, took the administration into her hands, having been brought up in martial exercises from her youth: she quickly gave them such proofs of her intrepid courage, and bloody disposition, that they readily submitted to her conduct, and followed her in her most dangerous expeditions, in which they were always sure to see her the foremost in every engagement. She affected to appear upon all occasions armed and dressed like a male warrior; and clad her daughter, in whom she observed the same martial and intrepid courage, in the same dress, taking the young virago with her in all her expeditions, in order to train her up in the same discipline.

Temban-dumba made such proficiency under her mother, and discovered such presence of mind on the greatest emergencies and difficulties, that Mussaza made no scruple to intrust her with the command of some of her forces, whilst she led the rest on to some important exploits; with which employment the young amazon was so elated, that she could hardly brook to be any longer in subjection to her.

*Temban-dumba a bloody virago.*

What added to the uneasiness of her restraint was, that, being of a no less amorous than warlike temper, she used to indulge herself in the embraces of several gallant youths of her army, of whom she, through the fickleness of her sex and younger years, became no sooner tired, than she caused them to be privately put to death, to make way for new paramours. For this cruelty and intemperance, her mother had often reprimanded her so severely, that being no longer able to bear her constraint, she broke out into open rebellion. She had already displayed such intrepid bravery on many occasions, that this bold action of hers, instead of disgracing, made her the more admired as well as dreaded by the whole savage army, who began to think her something more than human, and expressed the utmost eagerness to fight under her banner; so that the greater part of her mother's forces went over to her, and she quickly saw herself at the head of a numerous army, by whom she was more punctually obeyed than any general of the other sex could have been, as they imagined her indeed to excel them all in courage, prudence, and every other martial qualification.

*Her amours and cruelties.*

As



As soon as she found that her exploits and behaviour had raised in their minds such an extraordinary idea in her favour, her ambition inspired her with a new project to improve them to the greatest advantage, though by such means as must have filled any, but such an army of savage monsters, with horror.

*Speech to  
her army.*

She ordered her whole army to be drawn up in arms, and appearing before them in her masculine military dress, prepared them, by a proper preface, in which she acquainted them with her sanguine views of making them victorious and happy under her conduct, and, by their valour and assistance, to lay the foundation of a powerful and glorious kingdom and government, which should eternise her memory, and make them dreaded by all the Ethiopic realms around them.

*Founds the  
Giaga sect.*

But first of all she told them, that she must and would instruct and initiate them in the laws and rites of the ancient Giagas, their ancestors, as the most infallible means to make them as successful and opulent as the late Zimbo their leader, without the danger of exposing themselves to the same disasters and misfortunes. To convince them how much she was in earnest, and expected to be obeyed, she told them she would herself forthwith set them an example worthy of their imitation and valour. Having thus far raised their expectations, and fixed their attentive eyes and ears on her, she ordered an only son, which she had by one of her paramours, to be brought to her, together with a large pestle and mortar, in which, instead of overwhelming him with the caresses of a tender mother, as they might reasonably have expected, she, to their great surprize, and without the least shew of remorse, pounded the innocent babe alive, till she had reduced the bones, flesh, &c. into a pulp, among which she brayed several kinds of powders, herbs, roots, oil, and other drugs; and having mixed the whole in a kettle over a slow fire, into an ointment, she stripped herself and ordered some of her maids to anoint her with it from head to foot, before them all. Thus anointed, she resumed her martial dress, and told them, that that was the sovereign balsam which would render them not only strong and robust, and fit for martial exploits, but invulnerable and invincible, and a terror to all other nations.

*Horrid  
murder of  
her son.*

*Detestable  
superstition.*

It is hardly to be conceived how that unnatural action was admired, and how speedily and universally it was followed by her barbarian subjects; much less to reckon the many

many thouſands of male infants that were butchered in the ſame horrid manner, and for the ſame helliſh purpoſes.

She preſently after enacted a law, that none of her ſubjects ſhould undertake any thing of conſequence, or even conſult about any enterprize, till they had previously anointed themſelves with that deteſtable ointment, which, ſhe told them, would inſpire them with wiſdom to chuſe, and courage and reſolution to execute, all their projects. And, that there never might be wanting a ſupply of it, ſhe enacted ſome other edicts, by which ſeveral ſorts of male children were excluded from being admitted into the kilomba, or *camp*, or even from being brought up; ſome of them were ordered to be pounded, and boiled for the uſe above mentioned, and others, that were either deformed or defective, to be thrown to the dogs. She added thoſe infants which the chiefs and perſons of rank ſhould voluntarily offer for the common benefit of the whole; theſe ſhe ſaid, had by far greater virtue and efficacy, when made into ointment, than thoſe of the meaner ſort. Neither did ſhe ſuffer any woman to be delivered in the camp; which, ſhe affirmed, polluted it to ſuch a degree, as nothing could expiate but the death both of the mother and child <sup>b</sup>; ſo that, to deter pregnant women from it, ſhe condemned them to kill their offspring with their own hands, or to be themſelves put to death.

*Gives them ſeveral inhuman laws.*

Theſe laws, which ſhe ſtyled quixillas, and pretended to have been derived from time immemorial from the ancient Giagas, are ſtill, for the moſt part, religiously obſerved by that barbarous nation; though ſhe was forced herſelf to abate of the ſeverity of ſuch of them as were either detrimental to the increaſe of the male kind, or too ſhocking to the natural affection of parents, and might at length terminate in a general diſcontent, or perhaps in an open rebellion; eſpecially as ſhe had introduced others more agreeable to their natural barbarity, and equally capable of injuring them to it; and among theſe, that of feeding upon human fleſh, preferably to any other food. But here ſhe had, out of regard to her own ſex, made an exception againſt killing any of them for any ſuch purpoſe, or even to eat them, when they either died a natural, or were put to a violent death. Theſe laſt are by their law reſerved for another kind of ſacrifice; namely, to be butchered at the tomb of ſome noble or favourite perſon that chances to

*Commands the eating of human fleſh.*

<sup>b</sup> Cavaz. ap. Labat, p. 110, & ſeq.

die, in order to be interred with, and attend him into the next world. But this prohibition hath rather served to whet their appetite after it, especially among the great, who, in spite of the penalties it subjects them to, run the hazard of glutting themselves with it, as being by far the most delicious to their taste. Our author mentions one of their chiefs, named Giaga Cassango, who seldom failed of having a young woman killed every day for his table<sup>1</sup>.

She had likewise expressly forbid her army to carry any women with them on any warlike expedition, as being too apt to mollify the hearts of her soldiers; but this law was as little observed as the last mentioned, some of her chiefs making no scruple to carry them about with them by hundreds, either to satisfy their lust, or to be butchered for their food.

Several other laws she enacted, which seemed wholly calculated to extinguish not only humanity, but likewise all bashfulness and modesty in either sex: the reader may see an instance or two in the margin (C). As for those which related to their worship, they were comprised in a few superstitious ceremonies, such as preserving the bones of their deceased friends in boxes made portable for that

*Laws relating to worship.*

<sup>1</sup> Cavaz. ap. Labat, p. 123.

(C) One of them was, that as soon as a young female perceived the usual tokens of puberty, she was to give notice of it, that all her friends and acquaintance might come to congratulate her upon the agreeable prospect of her becoming a mother of children, and an useful member of society. But if, after having been married, or enjoyed as a mistress, four or five years, she gave no signs of pregnancy, she was condemned to die, as an useless clog to the community, and either reserved for the future obsequies of some great person, in order to attend him in the other world, or given up to

the owner to be butchered and eat.

Another was, that when any of her officers was to set out upon some expedition, he was to bring his favourite wife or concubine out with him into a public place, and, in full sight of a numerous circle of spectators, go through the whole exercise of the matrimonial converse with her, without the least shew of reluctance or bashfulness. And this even the greatest commander in her army was forced to submit to, or else run the risk of being discharged with shame and disgrace (1).

(1) Cavaz, ap. Labat, lib. ii. cap. 7. p. 125.

purpose,



purpose, in order to offer human victims, and consulting them upon all emergencies. The rest of them she turned over to the care or discretion of her quixillos, or *priests*, who failed not to multiply them to a very great degree, and to employ them for their own interest, insomuch that this destructive crew became a most grievous burden to the whole people both small and great, as they gave them a specious handle for fleecing the rich and oppressing the poor; all which the politic queen was obliged and glad to connive at, as these jugglers were the main supports of her authority.

But those she gave them with respect to her political government, were in much greater number, though all of the same inhuman nature, and calculated to encourage and enure her subjects to all manner of rapine, bloodshed, and remorseless cruelty; but these are indeed too shocking to deserve a farther detail, especially as we have had occasion to speak of them, as afterwards introduced and universally practised in the kingdom of Metamba, under the reign of that no less superstitious and bloody princess queen Zingha, whilst she continued attached to that cursed sect. Upon the whole, Tem-ban-dumba had so hardened all her forces in their destructive trade, that they spread fire and slaughter all over the Western Ethiopia, without mercy, or almost any opposition; and if at any time they met with a repulse, or even defeat, from some of her warlike neighbours, instead of being discouraged, she only grew more fierce and desperate, reinforced her army with all possible speed, and fell upon them with such eagerness and fury, that every thing was forced to give way to her, or fly from her victorious arms. What still more effectually animated her troops to follow her through the most arduous and dangerous enterprizes, was the applause and recompence they were sure to find at their return to the kilombo, especially with respect to the distribution of the plunder and slaves, and the number of these which were to be butchered at their usual festivals, after every successful expedition <sup>k</sup>.

*Her army  
spread fire  
and sword.*

Their kilombos, or *camps*, which very much resemble the ancient Roman castra, or the present libates, or Ethiopian villages, were built of such materials, and in such a manner, that they were quickly and easily reared, and all as nearly as possible in the same form. The officers, who

*Their camp  
described.*

<sup>k</sup> Cayaz. ubi supra, p. 137, & seq.

*Divided  
into seven  
quarters.*

are the chief directors of them, having pitched upon a proper spot, divide it into seven distinct quarters, each under the government of its own particular commander. In the center stands the royal pavillion, surrounded by those of the ministers, officers, and servants, belonging to court, the whole of which composes a spacious square, which is commonly surrounded with a strong thorny hedge, so disposed, that it is more like a labyrinth than a circular fence. Within this all that belong to the court, and chief officers of the army, have their separate habitations, in order to be always within call in case of an alarm, sudden surprize, or other disaster.

The next in rank is the quarter of the kalambolo, or general of the army under the king or queen: this officer is styled *muta-aita*, or *chief of the war*. He orders and directs all military expeditions, encampments, engagements, and retreats, and must therefore be an experienced and intrepid warrior, cruel, and void of all compassion and humanity. He is commonly attended in all his excursions by the chief of the *singhillos*, whom he consults about the plan, execution, success, and other particulars. He must likewise be a very strict observer of all the superstitious rites prescribed by the impious quixillian laws; for the omission of any one of them would be sufficient to render his enterprizes abortive and unfortunate<sup>1</sup>.

The third quarter is that of the *tendela*, or officer who commands the *ecoona*, or *rear-guard*, the chief of all the electors, as well as supreme officer during an interregnum, and as such held in the highest esteem next to the prince.

The fourth quarter is that which looks towards the *mutunda*, or *east*, and is commanded by the *mani-lumbo*, the chief engineer of all the fences or hedges, with which the camp is fortified, and particularly that part of it which belongs to the royal family. Upon which account he is authorized to come into the royal presence whenever he thinks fit, and this access renders him likewise much respected at court.

The fifth quarter is that which looks towards the west, commanded by an officer, who is entrusted with all private commissions, and charged with the execution of them.

The sixth quarter is that which is commanded by the *illunda*, or captain of the *quicumba*, or *baggage*, in time

<sup>1</sup> Labat, *ibid.* p. 150, & seq.

of war; and in time of peace, he is intruſted with the care of filling the magazines with arms, and is to ſee them kept in good order, and in readineſs to be diſtributed to the ſoldiery upon all emergencies.

The ſeventh or laſt quarter is commanded by another illunda, or keeper of the royal wardrobe and baggage. This laſt is looked upon as a place of great truſt, and commonly given to ſome prince of the blood, remarkable for his loyalty.

To all theſe great officers we may add that of the man-*Intendant*  
curio, or ſuperintendant of the proviſions, who is uſually *of the pro-*  
choſen for his ſingular dexterity, and inexorable rapaciouſ-*viſions.*  
neſs, in the art of plundering and ravaging: to this end he hath a great number of officers and ſlaves under him, equally qualified for the purpoſe; for the Giagas know not what it is to procure either victuals or other proviſions but by main force, except what they ſometimes purchaſe from the Europeans, in exchange for their ſlaves, who being moſtly very nimble-footed, very often give them the ſlip before their new maſters can ſecure them for exportation. This office of purveyor relates only to the court; for as to the ſoldiery they are obliged to get their proviſions where they can <sup>m</sup>.

The laſt office worth mentioning is that of the piumbis, or *fore-runners*, a kind of ſpies, whoſe buſineſs it is to be in continual motion, and to endeavour to diſcover the ſituation, ſtrength, and numbers of the enemy, to ſkirmiſh, oppoſe, or even to attack them, as occaſion offers, and to ſupport the van in their firſt onſet. Theſe piumbis are uſually choſen from among the ſtouteſt and moſt intrepid of the whole army, and fight accordingly the moſt deſperately of all. The weapons in uſe among all the *Weapons.*  
Giagas are the dart, or javelin, the bow and arrow, hatchet, dagger, and leathern ſhield; which laſt is very tough, and of ſufficient length to cover the whole body. They all fight on foot, either for want of horſes, or of the *Way of*  
art of uſing them in war. Their chief excellency conſiſts *fighting.*  
in their ſtrength and activity of body, in artfully covering themſelves, and throwing their miſſile weapons, by which they commonly annoy the enemy, and make them ſpend their ſhot againſt their ſhields; after which they renew the onſet with ſuch freſh vigour, as ſeldom fails of putting them to flight, which is always followed by a horrid ſlaugh-

<sup>m</sup> Labat, *ibid.* p. 152, & ſeq.



ter, unless it be, as Lopez pleasantly hints, when they engage the Amazons, who are naturally more swift-footed than they, the dread of being devoured by those cannibals adding speed to their heels <sup>n</sup>.

*Art of invading.*

When they invade any country where they expect considerable opposition, their way is to entrench themselves, and continue quiet a month or two, and only alarm the inhabitants with frequent skirmishes, till they think they have sufficiently harassed them; or, if these assault them, by standing only on the defensive, two or three days, till the enemy have spent their strength and fury; upon which their commanding officer sends out a large detachment in the night, to lie in ambush at some distance from the enemy's camp. On the morrow the assault being renewed, the poor natives finding themselves attacked in front and rear, are easily put to the rout, and leave their country to be ravaged at the pleasure of those bloody invaders <sup>o</sup>.

*Honours paid to their princes.*

Their monarchs take great state upon them, none being admitted to sit before them on a chair, except the Giaga colambolo, or head general, lately mentioned, who sitting as supreme judge, both civil and criminal, is allowed one with a back to it; which custom is thought to have been introduced at first by the Portuguese; but the tendela, who likewise sits as judge, is only allowed a little stool about a span high. Persons of a certain high rank are qualified to sit in the presence, upon a carpet, but are obliged to spread it with their own hands. Those who are admitted to speak to them must do it with their bodies bent almost double, or, if of an inferior rank, prostrate upon the ground, and their mouths almost close to the earth. If their monarch chance to sneeze, cough, or break wind, the whole audience must wish him health and long life upon it; and those who are nearest to his person must give notice to those that stand at a distance to do the same, by the beat of a kettle-drum; upon which they all express their good wishes, by the clapping of hands <sup>p</sup>.

*The dress of the Giagas.*

The Giagas are not over nice in their dress, excepting those of the highest rank. The men and women of the lower class are contented to go not only bare-headed and bare-foot, but naked all over but their middle, about which they commonly wear a bit of cloth, which scarcely covers half of their thighs; and if their princes and nobles, and

<sup>n</sup> Pigafet. lib. ii. cap. 19. & al. supra citat.  
Battel, Dapper.

<sup>o</sup> Pigafet.  
<sup>p</sup> Cavazzi ap. Labat, ubi supra, p. 156, & seq.

other persons of diftinction, indulge themfelves in gaudy apparel, it is rather out of pride and grandeur than from any affectation of modetty; a virtue againft which their legiflatrix levelled fome of her laws, as was lately hinted, and for which the whole libidinous Ethiopic nation fhew but little regard; fo that whatever finery the richer fort may bedeck themfelves with, is altogether by way of ornament. Battel, who ferved for fome time under the kilambolo, or, as he writes it, kalandolo, or *head general*, gives us the following description of his mafter's drefs.

*Ornaments.*

“ He wore long hair, fet off with many knots of bambafhells. His neck was adorned with a collar of mafos, which are another kind of fhells, found along the Ethiopic coafts, and fold among them for about the value of twenty fhillings. His middle was covered with a girdle of landes, or beads made of oſtrich eggs, and under it a palm-cloth as fine as filk. His body was painted with various figures, and anointed every day with human fat. He wore acrofs his noſe a piece of copper, about two inches long, and two others of the ſame fort in his ears, and his body was always painted red and white.” He doth not mention his wearing any thing on his hands or feet, but adds, that “ He had commonly twenty or thirty wives, who carried his bows and arrows, and four others held his drinking cups; and when he drank, they all kneeled down, and clapped their hands and fung.” As to the women of rank, though they wear only a cloth about the middle, they take a pride in adorning their hair, necks, arms, and legs, with fhells and beads of ſeveral forts; but have a diſagreeable cuſtom of pulling out four of their teeth, two above and two below; and thoſe who refuſe to undergo this operation are deſpiſed by the reſt.

*That of a chief deſcribed.*

We ſhall paſs by ſeveral others of their deteſtable rites and cuſtoms, and ſuperſtitious cruelties, eſpecially as we have already ſpoken of them under a former article, and proceed to the ſequel of Tem-ban-dumba's life and reign, who, after ſhe had filled the greateſt part of Ethiopia with terror, blood, and ſlaughter, fell at length a victim to that luſt and incontinency, which ſhe had ſo ſeverely puniſhed in thouſands of her own ſex.

*Sequel of the queen's hiſtory.*

After having murdered ſome hecatombs of her own parramours, to prevent the diſcovery of her private debauches, ſhe grew at length enamoured of a private ſoldier. He was named Kulembo, tall, ſtrong, and well-ſhaped, bold and

*She falls in love with a ſoldier, and marries him.*

intrepid, and no way inferior to her in craftiness and cruelty; and as he was not ignorant of the fate which had attended so many of his predecessors, so neither did he accept of her condescending offers, but with a fixed resolution to retaliate it upon her as soon as he found her affection towards him began to cool. In the mean time he strove to please her in every thing, and, in a little while, gained such an ascendant over her, that he prevailed upon her to make him her husband. The nuptials were celebrated with great pomp, after their manner, that is, with the deaths of a vast number of human and other victims, for the entertainment of their numerous guests; yet neither could this promotion nor the many other favours she heaped upon him, prevent his keeping so watchful an eye over her, that he became more and more apprised of her sickle, inconstant, lewd, and tyrannic disposition, and at length perceived, in spite of her dissimulation, that he was become quite indifferent, if not wholly disagreeable to her. He attempted to ward off the blow that threatened him, by renewing and redoubling his caresses, by sumptuous banquets, and such other entertainments and diversions, as he knew were most likely to suspend her treacherous intentions. He plied her in particular with variety of European wines, and with the most delightful cordial waters, till he found an opportunity of conveying a strong dose of poison into one them, of which she had no sooner drank, than she expired, as he expected, in his arms. He had the same success in the artful part he acted of a most tender and afflicted husband, and passed altogether unsuspected of having had a hand in the death of a spouse which he so deeply lamented, even to the attempting, more than once, to sheath his sword in his own breast. This counterfeited excess of grief, joined to his known and tried valour and conduct, made so deep an impression on the minds of the Giagas, who might probably be, by this time, quite tired of her inflexible laws and government, that he was declared her successor, and proclaimed king, not only without opposition, but with all possible demonstrations of joy.

*He is elected king.*

*Grand funeral of the queen.*

Kulembo's next care was to order his spouse's funeral obsequies with such magnificence as should give his new subjects a fresh proof of his pretended affection for her person. The place which he chose for her interment was on a distant eminence, where he caused a spacious

<sup>r</sup> Labat, *ibid.* p. 140, & seq.



cave to be dug, and divided into feveral large apartments, all hung with fome of the richeft cloths and ftuffs from Europe, and the floors covered with the fineft furs and curious mattings. That in which her corpf was to be laid was ftored with the choicelt meats and liquors: fhe was bedecked with all her coftly ornaments, and feated on a throne in a commanding attitude. It was borne by the firft minifters of ftate, guarded by the militia, and followed by the king and the whole court, who accompanied it with dreadful outcries, heightened by the found of all their martial mufic, which of itfelf would have been fufficient to have drowned the loudeft peals of thunder. The proceffion was clofed by the unhappy human victims, to be either butchered over her grave, or buried alive with her in it, which amounted to a prodigious number of each fex.

When they were come to the place, the corpf was de-  
 pofited in the apartment prepared for it, amidft the moft  
 hideous outcries of the court and foldiery, and the horrid  
 found of their martial instruments. The victims being flain,  
 part of their blood was poured in abundance over her,  
 and the reft drank in large draughts by the mourners.  
 Thofe victims that were defigned to attend her in the  
 other world, went down into the grave with feeming in-  
 trepidity, and fome with marks of joy. The carcafes of  
 the flain were thrown in afterwards, and the whole place  
 filled with earth.

*Numerous  
victims.*

By that time a number of other Giagan chiefs had  
 parted at the heads of fo many flying armies, and dif-  
 perfed themfelves over other parts of both Ethiopias, where  
 they committed their ufual ravages, leaving nothing be-  
 hind them but the moft melancholy marks of defolation.  
 The moft remarkable of thefe deffroyers were Calendo,  
 Caottea, Caja, Cabucco, and Cajumbo, who became in  
 time very confiderable in their refpective families, be-  
 fides many others of inferior note, not worth mentioning.  
 Among all thofe tribes of banditti, the new monarch of  
 the Mifumbi Giagas did not neglect fignaling the begin-  
 ning of his reign, by frequent excurfions and ravages,  
 even after his heart became captivated by a beauteous  
 flave, who quickly induced him to exchange the military  
 avocations for the pleasures of the matrimonial life. He  
 ceafed not to fend his officers and forces upon new ex-  
 ploits, whilft he and his beloved queen were employed in  
 begetting a numerous female progeny, till he at length  
 expired in her embraces, and was afterwards honoured by

*Several  
other chiefs  
of the Gia-  
gas rava-  
ge Ethio-  
pia.*

*Calendo's  
exploits.*

*Dis.*

her

her and all his subjects as an inferior deity. She outlived him a considerable number of years, and held out till the age of a hundred; by which time her natural heat was so exhausted, that her servants were obliged to expose her upon a cow's hide, to the rays of the most scorching sun; a privilege, which is allowed amongst them to none but kings and queens.

*Succeeded  
by Chingarii.*

Calendo was succeeded by Chingarii, who was born in the same province, a person not only equal to him in valour, but of a more brutish and fierce disposition, answerable to his name, which, in their language, signifies a lion. There had hardly appeared amongst them a chief so cruel, ambitious, and rapacious; till having ventured to try his bravery against the Portuguese of Angola, he found himself overmatched, and was defeated and slain in that country.

*Is slain at  
Angola.*

*Caluzimbo  
elected and  
murdered.*

His successor, named Caluzimbo, a man of courage and conduct, had been rather more successful in all his enterprizes, though of so gentle and humane a disposition, that he could never be prevailed upon to eat any human flesh, or drink human blood amongst them, either before or after his election. For this and no other cause his barbarian subjects conceived an invincible aversion to him. Under pretence that their late queen Tem-ban-dumba resented his open violation of her laws, a notion which the singhillos, or *priests*, took care to propagate, he was assassinated, to appease her anger, and three hecatombs of victims of each sex were ordered to be butchered at his funeral obsequies\*.

*A.D. 1648.*

*Cassange  
Calanga in  
league  
with the  
Portuguese.*

He is said to have had thirty successors; but we are neither told how long this dynasty lasted, nor any thing particular concerning any of these thirty chiefs, till we come to the three last; the oldest of whom named Cassange Calanga, we have had occasion to speak in a former chapter. This chief having entered into an alliance with the Portuguese viceroy of Angola, against the then bloody queen Zingha, who reigned at that time over the Metamban Giagas, was prevailed upon by that noble governor, to abolish some of the quixillian laws of the queen Tem-ban-dumba, particularly those that related to the destroying their own children, and bringing up in their stead those which they brought away captives in their excursions.

*Assassinated  
by his son.*

Cassange, out of complaisance to the Portuguese, consented to abolish those laws among his Musinibic Giagas;

\* Cavazzi, ubi supra, p. 148, & seq.

for which ſtep he was ſoon after aſſaſſinated by one of his ſons, and interred with the uſual ceremonies; but the parricide did not long enjoy the crown, which he had ſo vilely A.D. 1657.  
 The Giagas, according to their laws, claimed *Another ſon raiſed to the crown.*  
 their right of election, and ſet another ſon of the deceaſed upon the throne, named Caſſange Canguin Gurii, who, to gain the friendſhip of the Portugueſe nation, cauſed himſelf to be inſtructed in the principles of the Chriſtian religion, and was baptized by the name of Don Paſcale. But whether through fear of being dethroned by his incenſed ſubjects, or through a too ſtrong propenſity to Giagan cuſtoms, eſpecially an inſatiable appetite after human fleſh, he afterwards apoſtatized, and became more cruel and blood-thirſty, and committed greater ravages than any of his predeceſſors, ſpreading death and deſtruction every where around him, and ſtripping all the adjacent princes of whole provinces, either reducing them under the moſt dreadful ſlavery, or abandoning them to the moſt deſolate and deplorable condition<sup>t</sup>.

A great deal hath been written by judicious and learned men to explode the notion of anthropophagi out of the world; yet all they have alleged does not ſurely counterbalance the teſtimony of ſo many credible eye-witneſſes. Lopez aſſures us, that he ſaw human fleſh publicly ſold in their ſhambles<sup>u</sup>. And Battel, who carried arms under them during the ſpace of ſixteen months, and was ſo often preſent at theſe inhuman banquets, can hardly be ſuppoſed to have been miſtaken in the victims which were butchered and eaten before his face<sup>w</sup>.

This evidence is confirmed by the good old Capuchin Cavazzi, who, in all probability, had never ſeen, nor ſo much as heard of Battel's account; and who, during his fourteen years reſidence through Weſtern Ethiopia, was frequently engaged in ſpiritual combats with their chiefs and their prieſts, againſt that and others of their barbarous cuſtoms. The moſt ſhocking and horrid ſcenes of this nature were thoſe which not only he and his brethren, but a number of other laymen, had obſerved in the kingdom of Metamba, during the apoſtacy of queen Zingha.

<sup>t</sup> Labat ex Cavaz. lib. ii. p. 149, & ſeq.

<sup>u</sup> Vide Pigafet. lib.

i. cap. 5.

<sup>w</sup> See Purch. Pilg. vol. ii. p. 977, & vol. v. p. 773, &

2)ib. paſſ.



## C H A P. LI.

*The History of the Kingdom of Ansiko, Fungeno, Biafar or Biafra, and the Province of Calbaria, &c.*

*Boundaries  
and extent.*

**T**HIS kingdom, bounded by the river Umbre, which runs into the Zaire, and the kingdom of Wangua, has the Amboes, who border on Loango, on the west, some deserts of Nubia on the north, and the provinces of Songo and Sonda, parts of Kongo, on the south. Ansiko, according to Jarric, who makes no mention of its eastern or western confines, extends from Cacongo to Nubia. Here are copper-mines, rhinoceroses, lions, and other wild beasts.

*Inhabi-  
tants.*

The Ansikans, who have no lands or inheritance, wander, like Arabs, from one place to another, regardless of life, and intrepid in their undertakings; neither sowing nor reaping, living upon plunder and slaughter; dreaded for their extreme brutality, and never traded with by Europeans, although open and frank, and, in all appearance, without deceit. Their language is barbarous, and difficult to be learned, even by the inhabitants of Kongo. The most distinguished Ansikans wear red and black caps of Portuguese velvet, and the inferior sort of both sexes go bare-foot, and naked from the waist upwards. To preserve their health, they anoint their bodies with a composition of pounded white sandal-wood and palm-oil<sup>a</sup>.

*Diet.*

Their food is human flesh; and there are public markets, wherein human bodies are hung up for sale instead of beef and mutton. These people believe themselves possessed of a right to dispose arbitrarily of their slaves; the being an enemy justifies their practice; and prisoners of war are fattened, killed, and eat, or sold to butchers. Discontented slaves offer themselves for food to their masters; fathers and sons, brothers and sisters, reciprocally feed upon each other, without the least horror; and infants just born are eaten by their unnatural mothers. There are no graves for the dead amongst the Ansikans, but the bellies of the survivors, who eat the deceased as soon as they have expired.

*Cruelty.*

The king of Ansiko, or the great macoco, whose dominion extends over thirteen kingdoms, is esteemed the

<sup>a</sup> Pigafet, ap. La Croix, vol. iii. p. 410.

moſt powerful monarch in Africa. The zimbis, or ſhell fiſhed for at Loango and Angola, is the current coin of the country, which the natives exchange for ſlaves from Nubia, as alſo for ſalt, ſilk, glaſs, knives, and other merchandizes.

Currency.

Trade.

Their arms are battle-axes, and ſmall, but very ſtrong, bows, ſtrengthened and adorned with ſerpents ſkins, with ſtrings of ſupple and ſlender ſhoots of trees, like reeds, that never break, and ſhort arrows of hard and light wood. The Anſikans, who kill birds flying, ſhoot with ſurpriſing dexterity and diſpatch, inſomuch that they can diſcharge twenty-eight arrows from the bow before the firſt falls to the ground. One end of the battle-ax is ſharpenerd, and cuts like a wedge, and the other flattened like a mallet, with an handle ſet between, about half the length of the iron, rounded at the end like an apple, and covered with the ſkin of a ſerpent; with the flat end they ſcreen their bodies, and ward off the darts of their enemies. They have daggers likewiſe in ſerpent ſkin ſcabbards, which they carry in ivory belts, three fingers broad, and two thick, trimmed with dante, or lante ſkins.

Weapons.

Their religion is idolatry; they worſhip the ſun as their chief deity, whom they repreſent in the figure of a man; and the moon, under that of a woman, and an infinite number of inferior deties, each man having one peculiar idol, to whom he offers ſacrifices, and whom he conſtantly invokes in dangerous enterprizes <sup>b</sup>.

Religion.

There are but few remains of the ancient Giagas, mentioned in the foregoing chapter, whoſe four generals, or chiefs, Caſſange, Cajombo, Cabucco, and Caja, commanded each a ſeparate army; the preſent are moſtly natives of the countries they inhabit, inheriting the barbarity of their maſters, and the moſt cruel of cannibal nations. Theſe people, who try the courage of their priſoners of war by ſhooting at the youngſt and beſt made among them as at butts, and directing the arrows above or round their heads, fall on and devour thoſe who diſcover the leaſt ſigns of fear; whereas boring the noſes and ears, and drawing the two ſore-teeth of the upper jaw of thoſe who appear intrepid and reſolute, they bring them up to a ſuperior degree of barbarity, by training and accuſtoming them to the moſt horrid cruelties. Theſe Giagas are ſcattered throughout Africa, but their principal reſidence is in the kingdom of Anſiko, and on the ſouth-eaſt of Angola <sup>c</sup>.

Giagas.

<sup>b</sup> Pigafet. ap. La Croix, ubi ſup. p. 15, 27. <sup>c</sup> Pigafet, ap. La Croix, ubi ſup. p. 17.

Fungeno, or Fungando, a kingdom tributary to the great macoco, is situated between the rivers Zaire and Coanza, to the east of Conde. Stuffs made of the bark of matamba, consisting of long strings, like hemp, are the currency of Loango and Angola; on which account the Portuguese trade with the natives for stuffs and slaves. They themselves also trade with the people of Nimeamago, a kingdom situate on the south-east of Macoco. The prince of Nimeamago living in friendship with the great macoco, his subjects travel without danger through his dominions, and traffick at Fungeno <sup>d</sup>.

The kingdom of Biafar or Biafra, situated on the east of Benin, on the west of Medra, from which it is divided by a chain of mountains, extends on the south to the fourth degree of north latitude. The natives are exceedingly addicted to magic; imagining themselves capable of causing rain, thunder, and lightning; and therefore worship with great zeal, and sacrifice their children to the devil <sup>e</sup>.

The province of Calbaria, adjoining to Rio Real, or Royal River, takes the name of Calbaria from that river, which though broad, is too shallow to be navigated by ships of burthen. Near the coast, on the west bank of it, is a town, called by the Dutch Wyndorp, and by the Negroes, from the great quantity of wine, Toke: two branches spread to the east and west from the river, whose course runs constantly north. In the west branch is a road, three or four leagues in length, for trading vessels, and the town Calbaria is situated on the north side of this arm, a place of great trade with the Dutch, inclosed with pallisadoes, watered on the south by the river, and defended on the north by a boggy wood. On the south of this rivulet is an island of an oval figure, at a distance from the continent, from which it is divided only by a shallow canal, the land low, and covered with woods <sup>f</sup>.

About twelve leagues westward of Calbaria lies Belli, governed by one captain; and twenty leagues above the mouth is an arm of Rio Real, running east-north-east, and many other rivers near the banks. The province of Krike, bordering on the west of Moco, lies about twenty miles from the coast; on the back of Rio Real, southward of Moco, towards the coast, is the province of Bani,

<sup>d</sup> La Croix, ubi sup.  
ibid. p. 298, & seq.

<sup>e</sup> La Croix, vol. iii. p. 291.

<sup>f</sup> Ibid.



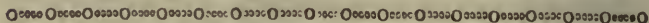
whose principal town is Guleba, the chief of this country, which extends westward from the river Calbaria, as far as Sangma, and has ten under officers. The cannibal Negroes, inhabitants of the eastern banks of Calbaria, circumcise the women that are marriageable, eat the slain only, and sell the prisoners of war at Calbaria. In the province of Moco is a sort of iron coin, as large as the palm of the hand. The canoes made use of by Calbarian Negroes are pointed at both ends, sixty feet long, and six broad; there is a fire-place in the center for dressing victuals, with planks across for rowers. Near each rower hangs a quiver of arrows, in case of an attack, these nations living in continual war. The canoes carry eighty persons; the slaves only are exposed to the damps of the air, the masters being sheltered in the night by reed mats spread upon poles, and fixed up in the manner of tents.

Loitomba river, called by the Portuguese Rio do Santo Domingo, is three leagues from the mouth of Rio Real, at the east end of which is a large town inhabited by Negro traders, who traffick in slaves, which they bring from distant countries. Next to Loitomba is old Calbaria, or Calborg river. The interjacent country is unprovided with water: the coast from Rio Real to ancient Calborg is twenty-four leagues in extent, north-north-east. Rio do Rey, or King's River, is the next, extremely large and wide, with three fathoms water, upon a muddy bottom, and without sand-banks, or rocks to defend the entrance; the country round is low and marshy. There is no sweet water but from rain, which Europeans, who trade upon this coast, are obliged to purchase at a dear rate.

The Calbongos, a wicked, deceitful, and filthy people, go naked, the private parts excepted; their bodies are bedaubed with various colours, and figures traced on their foreheads; and they inhabit the country near the source of this river, at a great distance from the coast. The Calbongos have no sincerity or natural love; parents sell their children, husbands their wives, and brothers their sisters. In this country, those criminals are declared innocent, who make an incision and suck the blood out of their arms.

The great trade of this river consists in slaves, which are exchanged for small copper bars, thirteen or fourteen of which, weighing about twenty-two pounds, purchase a good slave. Coral grains and copper basons are likewise imported; and the Negroes, who deal in acori, arrows, knives,

knives, and ivory, have brought, for years, four hundred quintals of elephant's teeth, and five hundred slaves to market, at a village near the coast, situated on the banks of a rivulet that runs into this river &.



## CHAP. LII.

### *The History of Benin, under the ancient Division of Guinea.*

#### SECT. I.

*Containing a geographical Account of the whole Coast, with all its Subdivisions into distinct Provinces and Districts, particularly of the Kingdom of Benin; the Manners, Laws, and Religion of the Natives; its Cities, Rivers, Trade, and Commodities.*

*Geographical description of the coast of Guinea.*

**G**UINEA, Ghinney, or Guiney, is a vast extended coast, stretching from 4 deg. and a half to 10 deg. and a half north latitude, lying between the great river Camerone on the east, and the mouth of the river Sierra Leona on the west, comprehending 30 deg. of longitude. Other geographers confine its limits between Cape Lop Gonsalvo, or Cape Negroe, and the river Senegal. The appellation of Guinea is probably unknown to the natural inhabitants, and seems to be derived from the name Ghe-nehoa, imposed by the early Portuguese navigators on a country south of Senegal. Some writers, however, are hardy enough to derive the term Guinea from the dry nature of the soil and climate; the word, according to them, signifying as much in the language of the natives; but surely they did not reflect that no country under heaven is better watered with rivers, springs, and rain.

The general division of this coast is into south and north. The first extends from the river Senegal to Sierra Leona. South Guinea comprehends six distinct coasts, called provinces, and known by different names; viz. the Grain Coast, by some termed the Pepper Coast, the Ivory Coast,

the Gold Coast, the Slave Coast, and those of Benin and Biafara. However, the more general and common division is contained under four districts, viz. the Slave, Gold, Ivory, and Grain Coasts<sup>a</sup>. The Slave Coast, or Benin, is bounded by Nigritia on the north, by the unknown inward parts of Africa on the east, by Congo, or that part of the Atlantic ocean called the Gulf of Guinea, on the south, and on the west by the Gold Coast; stretching along the sea-coast from the river Camerone on the east, to the Danish fort of Christianburgh, near the river Volta, on the west. The chief rivers of this division are these, the Great Camerone, which bounds it to the south-east, the river Del Rey on the west, the rivers Forcades, Formosa, and Lagos, still farther west, and lastly, the river Volta at the extremity of the western boundary.

The chief towns which give name to a variety of different kingdoms within this district, are these that follow: Benin, situated on the river Formosa, in 7 deg. and a half north latitude; Awerri, standing at the mouth of the river Forcades, subject to the Portuguese; Arebo, on the east side of the river Formosa; Great Ardrah; little Ardrah; both standing near the river Lagos; Whidah, or Fida, situated between the Lagos and the Volta; Great and Little Popo, both on the same coast, west of Whidah; Lampo, or Alampo, a little to the westward of the mouth of the river Volta. As to the country of Benin Proper, no European nation has planted settlements there besides the Portuguese, who are in a manner the despotic sovereigns of this district. If we may credit their missionaries, they have converted the natives to Christianity; however, other travellers inform us, that the inhabitants of the sea-coast are a miserable sort of proselytes, a profligate, wretched, and abandoned race, addicted to all manner of vice, and more artificial in their depravity than the original and unmixed inhabitants of remote countries.

*The first division.*

The Gold Coast, so called from the abundance of that metal it affords, is terminated by Nigritia, or Negroland on the north; by the Slave Coast on the east; the ocean on the south, and by the Tooth or Ivory Coast on the west. It is watered by the Rio Cobra, or Ancobar, and some others of less note. The capitals giving name to a number of petty kingdoms are, Aquamboe, Agona, Ran-

*Second division.*

<sup>a</sup> Prevost, Hist. Gen. des Voyages, tom. vi. lib. ii. chap. 1. Bosman Epist. 21.



tyn, Acron, Fetu, Sabo, Commami, Axim, Ante, Adom, and Jabi.

*Third division.*

The next division of Guinea is the Ivory or Tooth Coast, taking its name from the elephant's teeth found here. It is bounded likewise by Nigritia on the north; by the Gold Coast on the east; by the ocean on the south; and by the Malaguette, or Grain Coast, on the west. Among the most remarkable towns and places on this coast are, Jaque, Cape Lahoe, Drumyn, Bottown, Sina, Sestre, and Palmas. The principal rivers are the Rio de Suero and Rio Escravos.

*Fourth division.*

The last and most western division of Guinea is the Malaguette, Grain, or Pepper Coast, bounded by Nigritia on the north; the Ivory Coast on the east; and on the south and west by the ocean. Its chief rivers are the Rio de Sestro, the Rio de St. Paul, and the river de Sierra Leona. Its capitals of the several petty states contained under the general division are, the towns of Basso, Sanguin, Sestro, Tomba, Buga, and Gorea<sup>b</sup>.

*An account of the kingdom of Great Benin.*

To begin with the first of these divisions, the kingdom of Benin is a region of great extent, the limits of which are but imperfectly ascertained. We find it mentioned by writers under the names of Benin, Binuin, Binni, or Benni; the first of which, as the most common, we have retained. Most historians, however, place it between the 19th and 35th deg. of east longitude, and the 3d and 10th parallels of latitude. Hence they reckon it extends nine hundred and thirty miles east and west, and about six hundred and forty north and south; a prodigious tract of land to remain for so long a time imperfectly known. On this supposition, its boundaries to the west will be the Gold Coast, and the gulf of Benin, separated by the river Volta. On the north will be Nigritia, the kingdoms of Mayack and Makoko on the east, and the gulf of Congo on the south. However, these particulars are very indistinctly marked by geographers, and with as little precision by the writers of voyages. Prevost greatly retrenches the above limits of the kingdom of Benin; but we will not oppress the reader with a variety of opinions and barbarous terms, to which he can affix no determinate and clear ideas.

The first discovery of this kingdom is attributed to Juan Alfonso de Aveiro, a Portuguese, who gave the appella-

<sup>b</sup> Aut. citat. loc. citat.

tion of Formosa to the river Benin, from the verdure and beauty of its banks, adorned with tall, straight, and spreading trees. Notwithstanding the apparent satisfaction it affords, and the pleasing scene it presents to the eye, the air is noxious and pestilential, qualities owing to the gross vapours exhaled by the sun's heat from its marshy banks. The vermin produced by the heat is another inconvenience equally insupportable. Here are such quantities of mosquito flies as render life intolerable. On the banks of this river are some towns, where the Europeans, particularly the Dutch, carry on a commerce. They are called by Nyendael, Bododo, Arebo or Arbon, Agatton or Gatton, and Meiberg. The first contains about fifty houses, or little cabbins, built of reeds, and covered with leaves. Here a viceroy has his residence, attended by a council, whose jurisdiction extends over this canton in all civil affairs, levying taxes, and rating duties and imposts on merchandize. In criminal cases of great importance the viceroy and council are obliged to send to Benin, the capital, for the orders of the court<sup>c</sup>.

*The air and climate.*

*Towns.*

About two miles from the mouth of the river, it divides itself into two branches, distant two English miles from each other. Upon one of them stands the little town of Awerri, or Ouverne, governed by a free and independent prince. Arebo, which now is the center of commerce of Benin, is situated sixty leagues up the river. Notwithstanding the river branches out into innumerable streams, ships of burthen can go a great way higher, and anchor in fine large creeks and sandy bays. Arebo is a fine, large, and populous city, of an oval figure, the houses larger, but built with the same materials, and in the same taste as those of Bododo. The city and adjacent country are under the government of a viceroy and council, with similar powers as those of Bododo. The Portuguese have a factory and church at Awerri, and here and at Arebo the English and Dutch had a settlement, agents, and factors: the former, however, through carelessness, have suffered theirs to fall into ruin, and at present it is totally abandoned<sup>d</sup>.

*River Benin or Formosa.*

*Arebo.*

*Agatton.*

Agatton, or Gatton, has likewise been a place of consideration for its extent, commerce, and the number of its inhabitants. By the ravages of war it is now almost totally deserted. It stands on the Formosa, twenty-four leagues higher than Arbok, a canal separating the dis-

<sup>c</sup> Barbot, p. 355.

<sup>d</sup> Prevost, *ibid*.

tricks belonging to each town; and about ten leagues north of Oedo, or Benin, the capital of the empire.

*Meiberg.  
Massacre  
of the na-  
tives of  
Meiberg.*

The last of the four commercial towns is Meiberg, a name given to this place by the Dutch. Here the Hollanders carry on a great trade, and maintain a considerable settlement, rendered famous by a tragical event. Beelsyder, a Dutch factor, having conceived a violent passion for one of the women belonging to the Negroe governor, took the resolution of carrying her away. The governor, transported with rage, attacked the Dutch settlement with a body of troops, and forced the factor to retreat on board a vessel lying in the road, after having received a wound, of which he soon died. The director-general, who was ill informed of the circumstances, imprudently determined to, avenge the death of the factor. For this purpose he fitted out a brigantine, and surprised the Blacks at Meiberg, massacring, without mercy, man, woman, and child, as they came in his way. The news of this event soon reaching the court at Benin, the king demanded an explication of the causes of this bloody execution. Being informed of the particulars, instead of turning his resentment against the Dutch, who had broke through all the laws of justice, hospitality, and humanity, he exerted it, from views of policy, with the most horrible circumstances of barbarity, against the innocent governor and his whole race, ordering them to be extirpated without exception, and their dead bodies to be given a prey to the wild beasts. The Dutch, perceiving the king so zealously attached to the interests of commerce, have ever since remained there, exercising a despotic and arbitrary sway over the unhappy wretches, the natural proprietors<sup>c</sup>.

*Benin, the  
city.*

Benin, the capital, is a city of great extent: Artus of Dantzic calls it eleven miles in circumference, containing one hundred thousand inhabitants. The entrance is by a large street, which, according to the same writer, is eight times wider than any street in Holland. This we apprehend to be a sort of avenue or great road leading to the city, since other travellers, who have measured it, call it eight leagues in length. It passes through the city, dividing it into two equal parts, and is itself cut by innumerable other streets that traverse it; for the whole eight leagues the houses stand so close on each side the road, that it may well be mistaken for a street. After advancing twelve miles, we come to a large gate, which divides

<sup>c</sup> Bosman, Epist. 21.



the city from the suburbs. The gate is of wood ; but it is defended by a strong bastion of mud and earth, surrounded by a deep ditch forty feet wide. Here a guard is constantly kept to receive the tolls, duties, and imposts, upon merchandize. All the streets of the city are strait, long, and broad, adorned with a variety of shops filled with European merchandize, as well as the commodities of the country. Formerly the houses stood close, the whole street appearing like one complete building, every part of it in a manner surcharged with inhabitants : at present it is broke by numberless chasms and ruins, that seem to preface its total destruction. As the country affords no stone, all the houses are built with mud and clay, covered with reeds or straw, with an elegance that is astonishing : nor is the architecture of the principal buildings altogether contemptible, many of them being not unworthy of a more civilized people<sup>f</sup>. Only natives are permitted to live here ; several of whom are wealthy, and trade to a great extent. The women are employed in keeping the streets neat and clean ; in which respect the inhabitants of Benin are not exceeded by the Hollanders themselves. A principal part of the city is taken up by the royal palace, which is rather prodigious in its dimensions than commodious or elegant in the contrivance. The eye is first saluted by a long gallery, sustained by fifty-eight strong planks, rough and unpolished, about twelve feet in height, and three in circumference. Passing this gallery, we come to a high mud wall, which hath three gates. That in the center is decorated at the top with a wooden turret of a spiral form, seventy feet high. Upon the very extremity of this cone is fixed a large copper snake, well cast, carved, and bearing marks of a proficiency in the arts. Within the gate is an area of fine turf, a quarter of a mile in length, and near as broad ; at the farther end of which is another gallery in the same taste as the former, only that the pilasters, which sustain it, are ornamented with human figures, and many of them cut out in that form, but in a gross and awkward manner. Behind a canvass curtain are shewn four heads cast in brass, neither resembling the human or brute figure, each of them supported by a large elephant's tooth, the king's property. Passing through this gallery and another gate, we see the king's dwelling-house in front ; an appearance that by no means dazzles with its pomp and magnificence. Here is another snake over the porch. In the first apartment is the king's audience chamber, where,

*The royal  
palace.*

<sup>f</sup> Nyendacl, p. 432.

in presence of the chief nobility or officers of the court, he receives foreign ministers and ambassadors. His throne is of ivory, under a canopy of rich silk. This chamber of audience would likewise seem to be the repository of his majesty's merchandize (for here the king, as well as his subjects, is a trader), it being filled with loads of elephants teeth, and other commodities, lying in a confusion which plainly indicates they are not intended for ornament. The room is hung with fine tapestry, and the floor covered with mats and carpets of an indifferent manufacture. All the city, except the royal palace, is falling into decay; and the reason assigned for it by Nyendaël is the following<sup>c</sup>. The king, jealous of the wealth of two petty princes of the street, as they are called, ordered them to be seized, put to death, and their effects confiscated to his own use, under pretence that they had conspired against his life. They gave the clearest proofs of their innocence; but the king was determined; nothing being so inexorable and deaf to the cries of pity as avarice. Soon after this barbarity, he meditated the destruction of another person, whose growing wealth excited his jealousy and natural passion for money. This nobleman, being timely apprised of his majesty's intention, quitted the city, and with him left it three-fourths of the inhabitants, who were strongly attached to his person, and apprehensive how far the king might exert his prerogative of being wicked. They were pursued by the sovereign, who, immediately on their departure, had assembled an army. He was, however, so warmly received by the fugitives, that he was forced to retreat with loss and disappointment. He made a second attempt to oblige them to return by force; but the event was agreeable to justice; he was defeated and pursued in his turn by the nobleman, who, entering the city sword in hand, plundered the whole, except the palace, which was too strongly defended for him to force. For ten successive years he continued with his fugitive band to harass, plunder, and molest, the inhabitants of Benin, till at length, by the mediation of the Portuguese, a peace was concluded; by which he was granted a free and full pardon, and even requested to return to his habitation. As he did not choose again to put himself into the power of a prince, whose disposition he was but too well acquainted with, he fixed his residence at a place three days journey from the capital, where he kept a

<sup>c</sup> Nyendaël, p. 434. Dapper, p. 18.

court that greatly eclipsed that of the king. All endeavours were in vain used to bring his adherents back to the city<sup>b</sup>. They were promised lucrative posts and honours about court; but they preferred poverty with freedom, to wealth and dignity with servitude; whence the city of Benin has ever since remained in a manner depopulated.

Besides the dry merchandize with which the markets of Benin abound, they are also well-stocked with eatables, a little particular in their kind. Here they expose dogs to sale for eating, of which the Negroes are fond. Roasted monkeys, apes, and baboons, are every where to be seen. Bats, rats, lizards dried in the sun, palm-wine, and fruit, form the most luxurious entertainments, and stand continually exposed to sale in the streets.

As to the government, it is despotic. The empire is divided into an infinite number of petty royalties, all of them subject to the king of Benin. Although they boast of being born freemen, yet can nothing be more servile than the blind obedience they pay to the king's authority. They are even proud of being looked upon as the slaves of the monarch, that being deemed a distinguished mark of honour<sup>c</sup>.

The natives of Great Benin are in general a good-natured, gentle, and civil people, from whom, by kind usage, any thing may be obtained. If they receive presents, they make returns of double the value, and will even steal to manifest their gratitude. If a stranger makes a request, he is seldom refused, however inconvenient it may be to comply with his desire. In short, their disposition is no less easily worked upon by soft means, than inflexible to all kind of severity and rough usage. They are quick and alert in business, greatly attached to their ancient manners, and shocked at any the least innovation. In this particular alone, they are disagreeable, many of their customs being equally disgusting and unnatural to an European. In their bargains, with strangers especially, their tenaciousness of their own opinions renders it difficult to deal with them. It frequently happens that a bargain for elephants teeth will take up some weeks before it is completed, with so many ceremonious civilities, truly ridiculous, is it preceded; yet with each other, where they repose a confidence, no people make greater dispatch. Nyendaël complains of another inconvenience, which attends

*Commodities of the country.*

*Government.*

*Disposition of the natives.*

<sup>b</sup> Idem *ibid.*  
& Dapper, *ibid.*

<sup>c</sup> Ogilvy's Description of Africa; also Nyend.



the commerce of that country. The Dutch and Portuguese, he says, are obliged to trust them with goods to make paans or cloths of, for the payment of which they frequently stay so long, that, from the approach of the unhealthy season, the consumption of provisions, and mortality among their people, they are under the necessity of leaving the country without their money. However, upon their return, they are honestly paid to the last farthing.

*Method of  
carrying on  
business.*

The government appoints a kind of brokers called *mercadores*, or *fiadors*, to treat with strangers about all merchandise. These *mercadores* speak a corrupt Portuguese, which enables them to converse with Europeans. This qualification is esteemed by their countrymen their only excellency; in other respects, they are looked upon as the refuse and dregs of the people, because they trade upon borrowed capitals; in such esteem are riches held even among Negroes and Barbarians, and such is the contempt affixed to poverty. Among themselves all private bargains are dispatched with the utmost secrecy for fear of exciting the jealousy or avarice of their governors. Their being represented to these as great traders, would infallibly be attended with ruinous consequences; for the governors keep a number of emissaries in constant employment, always ready to accuse those persons they are desirous of sacrificing to their interest and ambition. For this reason those who are out of power, and bear no share in the government, carefully conceal their wealth, exhibiting every appearance of poverty, in order to escape the rapacious hands of their superiors<sup>k</sup>.

*The political  
divisions of the  
people.*

The state of Benin is divided into three classes of men beside the king, whose will is a law. The first and highest rank is composed of three persons, called great lords, who are always about the king's person. Whoever wants to apply for favours from the throne must first address himself to them. They undertake to present the petition, and to return his majesty's answer; but in fact acquaint him with no more than they think proper, so that the supreme government may be said to be lodged in the three great lords. They are the more secure in their usurpation, inasmuch as besides them hardly any other persons are admitted into the king's presence, much less to his conversation<sup>l</sup>.

<sup>k</sup> Nyendaël, loc. citat.

<sup>l</sup> Artus, tom. ii. p. 120.

The next state or class is composed of those petty princes called *ares de roe*, or *street kings*, some of which preside over the commons, and others over the slaves; some over military affairs, while others superintend every thing relating to cattle, and the fruits of the earth. Out of this class there is a particular supervisor over every branch of trade, manufacture, farming, and every thing relative to civil or military police. From this degree of men are elected the viceroys and governors of provinces subject to the king; all of them under the direction, and responsible for their conduct to the three great lords. These honourable posts are obtained by the recommendation of the great lords; the king presenting each with a string of coral on his appointment, that being equivalent to the badge of the order of knighthood in Europe. This string he is perpetually to wear about his neck, without presuming, under the penalty of degradation, and even death, ever to lay it aside on any account whatever. If he is so unhappy as by accident to lose it, or to suffer it to be stolen from him, he is ipso facto condemned to death, without even the possibility of the king's reprieve. Of this Nyendaël gives the following instances: at the time this gentleman resided in the kingdom of Benin, an *are de roe* had his chain stolen from him, upon which he was seized, and put to death, without form of trial: the person who had committed the theft was likewise taken and condemned, as were three persons supposed to be accessory to the fact. Thus five men lost their lives for a chain of coral, intrinsically not worth two pence. The second instance happened in 1700, attended with more extraordinary circumstances: the captain of a Portuguese ship having staid after all the European fleet had sailed, in order to collect some debts, finding that they came in but slowly, resolved to cause the *are de roe*, his greatest debtor, to be conveyed on board his ship. This violence the other resisted, and a scuffle with the sailors ensued. The pilot, who had received some hurt in the fray, laid hold of the coral chain, broke it in pieces, and flung them overboard; on which the *are de roe*, quite dispirited by the fatal accident, surrendered himself to the Portuguese. As his confinement was not strict, he found means, when the pilot was asleep, to lay hold of a blunderbuss, with which he shot him through the head. Nor was he contented with this revenge; he seized a cutlass, and hewed the carcase in pieces, saying, that he had now punished the villain, and was indifferent about the consequence; for, continues he, when my cor-

ral was thrown overboard, I was dead by the law; now my creditor is dead in fact, and I have had the satisfaction of revenge. The captain, not choosing to punish him by his own authority, delivered him up to justice: he was immediately committed to a dungeon, and, upon the arrival of the next Portuguese ship, punished with death, not for the murder, but for having lost the coral chain<sup>m</sup>.

The third order of state consists of the *fiadors*, who likewise wear the coral, but with some distinctions of subordination and inferiority to the *ares de roes*. Besides the *fiadors*, under the same class are ranked the *mercadores*, or *merchants*, the *fulladors*, or *pleaders*, the *veilles*, or *elders*, all of them discriminated with some distinguishing mark or method of wearing the coral chain. To these succeed the *plebcians*, as next in order. This class of people is in general indolent, lazy, and idle, few of them, besides the extreme poor, choosing to work or better their condition by labour and industry. The whole burden of the necessary work is laid upon the women and slaves, whether it be tilling the ground, spinning cotton, weaving cloths, or cleaning the streets. Besides weavers, the only artists in this country are smiths, carpenters, and leather-dressers, all of them so awkward in their professions, that an European boy, with a month's instruction, would far surpass those who have employed their whole lives in the business<sup>n</sup>.

*The method  
of living of  
the natives*

Such of the natives as can afford it, feed well. Their common diet is beef, mutton, or fowls, with yams for bread, which, after boiling, they beat into a sort of cake. They frequently make entertainments for each other, the fragments of which are constantly distributed among the poor, a practice worthy the imitation of more polished nations. The meaner ranks of people content themselves with smoked or dried fish. Their bread is made of yams, bananas, and beans, mixed and beat up together. For their drink they use the limpid brook, or water mixed with a bad wine they call *pardon*. The richer sort drink water and European brandy to their meals<sup>o</sup>.

The king, great lords, and even viceroy and governor, support, according to their ability, a certain number of poor at the places of their residence. The blind, the lame, and infirm, are the objects of their charity; as for the lazy, they are suffered to starve, if they refuse to sup-

<sup>m</sup> Nyendaël, p. 430.  
endaël, p. 441.

<sup>n</sup> Ibid. etiam Artus. loc. citat.

<sup>o</sup> Ny-



ply their own wants. By this excellent police, not a beggar or vagrant is to be seen. The public officers keep the idle to labour, to prevent their infirmities, the consequence of poverty, from increasing the tax on themselves. This necessary care succeeds so happily, that in spite of their natural indolence, the indigent are but few. Liberality and generosity are distinguishing qualities in the natives of Benin; but they accompany their donations with an ostentation that destroys the grace and beauty of the action: nay, so intoxicated are they with the love of praise, and the reputation of liberality, that they often impoverish themselves, and ruin their families, to excite admiration<sup>p</sup>.

Their dress is neat, ornamental, and far exceeding in magnificence that of the Negroes of the Gold Coast. The rich among them wear first white callico, or cotton petticoats, about a yard in length, and half a yard in breadth, by way of drawers. This they cover with another fine piece of callico of sixteen or twenty yards, which they very artfully and becomingly plait in the middle, throwing over it a scarf a yard long and a foot wide, the ends of which are adorned with a handsome lace or fringe. As to the upper part of the body, it is mostly naked. Such is the dress in which they appear in public; at home their cloathing is more simple and less expensive, consisting only of a coarse paan for drawers, covered with a large painted cloth, worn in the manner of a cloak, of home manufacture.

*Dress of the natives.*

Among the ladies, those of better fashion wear fine callico paans, beautifully chequered with various colours. The dress is long and open behind, or on one side, just as fancy directs. The face and upper part of the body is covered with a thin veil, which they remove among their friends and intimates of either sex. The neck they adorn with strings and chains of coral agreeably disposed and wrought. Upon their arms and legs they wear bright copper or iron bracelets of mean workmanship, and all their fingers are crowded with rings of the same metal. Upon the whole, their persons are not disagreeable, after custom has rendered them familiar to the eye; and, excepting the rings and bracelets, the dress is by no means unbecoming or inelegant. The meaner degrees of women, as well as the men, differ from those of higher rank only in the quality of their cloaths, the form being in every re-

<sup>p</sup> Ibid. 445.

spect the same. Almost all their children go naked till the age of ten or twelve years; the girls indeed are directed by nature when to wear cloaths; till then their whole dress consists of a few strings of coral twisted round their waist, rather for ornament than decency. The men neither curl or adorn their hair, but suffer it to grow in its natural order, except in two or three parts, which they buckle, in order to suspend a bunch of coral to each lock. The women, on the other hand, use great art in dressing their hair, which they throw into a variety of different forms, great and small buckles, high and low foretops, sometimes plaited up behind, at other times formed in ringlets; but generally divided on the crown of the head. Some anoint it with a kind of oil they express or roast out of oil nuts, whence it loses its black colour, and in process of time becomes of a green or yellow<sup>a</sup>.

*Marriages.* The men marry as many women as their circumstances will permit, the laws limiting them to no determinate number. They have scarce any nuptial ceremonies, and indeed the rite is so frequent, that it must diminish its solemnity. The only circumstance in which it differs from a common assembly of friends, is, the elegance and profusion of the entertainment. If a man loves a young female, he discovers his passion to the most considerable person among his relations, who proceeds to the virgin's house, and demands her of her friends. If she be not already engaged, he seldom meets with a repulse. As soon as the consent of the parents is obtained, the match goes on, and the bridegroom presents his future bride with a suit of cloaths, bracelets, rings, and necklace, proportioned to the degree of his affection and wealth. After having treated the relations on both sides with a handsome collation, the marriage is ended, and consummated without any other ceremony.

*Jealousy of the men.* The natives are jealous of each other to a degree of madness, but never take offence at any liberties taken with their wives by Europeans, deeming it impossible that the taste of the women should be so depraved as to grant unbecoming favours to a white man. Among the people of fashion the women here live after the manner of the Eastern nations, cooped up from all conversation with the males of their own complexion and features; but treated otherwise with great tenderness, in order to alleviate the misfortune of the loss of liberty. If the master of the

<sup>a</sup> Nyendaël, p. 490.

house receives a visit from any of his acquaintance, his wife immediately retires, unless the stranger prove an European, in which case they are desired to remain in their seats. They use every female artifice to engage the affection of their husbands, knowing how much their happiness depends upon his will.

Adultery, and every violation of the marriage-bed, is *Punishment of adultery.* punished in three different ways. If, among the lower class of people, a husband suspects the fidelity of his wife, he tries every method to surprise her in the fact, without which he has no power of inflicting any other punishment than ill usage. If he succeeds in detecting the intrigue, he becomes immediately possessed of all the estate real and personal of the gallant, which he may from that instant seize, occupy, and enjoy as his own. The offending wife is disciplined with a cudgel, driven out of the house, an expulsion which commonly ends in misery, few persons choosing to receive her into their houses, and fewer still to marry the woman who has so grossly violated her faith. The method usually practised in such cases is, to retire into a country where they are not known: here they either pass for widows, and watch for a second opportunity of matrimony, or else enter upon trade, or subsist by labour. Among persons of condition, the crime is atoned by a sum of money, which the relations of the wife advance, in order to avoid the scandal annexed to adultery. After this peace-offering, she passes with the husband and all her acquaintance for a woman of virtue, proportioned to the money received by the husband. As to the governors and ares de roe, they punish this crime with the utmost severity. Both the woman and gallant are immediately put to death, if they are taken in the fact; their bodies are thrown upon dunghills, a prey to the birds of the air and beasts of the field, without process of law, or form of trial. From the severity of the punishment it is that the violation of the marriage-bed is less known in Benin than in any other country. Men are deterred from indulging themselves in a passion attended with such ruinous and fatal consequences.

In general the Negroes of this country are libidinous, and much addicted to venery, a disposition which they ascribe to the free use of pardon wine, and good eating. This, however, is an observation which will hold not only in Benin, but in almost all warm climates. Their con-



versation is pure, and free from all obscenity; the rites of love they hold as sacred, to be spoken of only in places destined for that purpose, in retreats, and in a manner neither to offend the eye nor ear; yet the delicate hint, the well-wrapped double-entendre, is so far from being prohibited, that the person possessed of this talent passes for the first of wits. Hence it is that conversation is continually enlivened with well-contrived fables, and chaste similes, tending however to this point. The pregnant wife is forbid the caresses of her husband till after delivery. If the infant proves a male, it is presented to the king, as properly and of right belonging to him; but the females, as the property of the father, are entirely under his power, live with him till marriage, and in this are wholly directed by his will.

*Children circumcised.*

About a fortnight after birth, both males and females are circumcised, the former by the loss of the preputium, the latter of the clitoris; a custom that prevailed among most primitive nations, though it might be difficult to assign the cause. The infants have, besides, small incisions made, in a manner expressive of certain figures, all over their bodies. The females are more tortured with those unnatural ornaments than the males, and both at the pleasure of the parent. When the infant is seven days old, the parents, imagining that now it has escaped the greatest danger, give an entertainment, and, to appease evil spirits from doing them an injury, they strew the roads with their best provisions and wines.

*Twins reputed happy omens.*

When a woman bears two children at a birth, it is deemed a happy omen; the king is made acquainted with it, and public rejoicings are ordered to be kept, which they express by a variety of wretched music, vocal and instrumental. As the task of suckling both children is esteemed too difficult for the mother, the father by law is obliged to look out for a nurse who has lost her own child; and that no advantage may be taken of his circumstances, her price is rated by authority. At Arebo only, twin births are reputed a bad omen, and attended with great grief to the unhappy parents. Here they actually treat the mother with the utmost barbarity, killing both her and the children, and sacrificing them to a certain demon which they are firmly persuaded haunts the village. If the husband happens to be uncommonly fond of his wife, he purchases her life, and sacrifices in her stead a female

*Twins and their mothers put to death at Arebo.*

slave; but the children, without possibility of redemption, are the atoning offering which this cruel and savage law requires. Such an impression have those dismal events made upon the men in general, that those whose circumstances are able to support the expence, usually send their wives to be delivered in another country; whence it is probable, that this more than savage custom will one day be abolished. The wood supposed to be frequented by this evil spirit is kept so sacred, that no foreign Negro of either sex is permitted to enter it. If a native of Arebo accidentally falls into any path leading to this wood, he is obliged, however pressing his business may be, to pursue it to the end without looking back; the violation of which custom, or of that other cruel one of murdering their wives and children, they believe will be attended with a plague, famine, or some public calamity. Notwithstanding this rivetted superstition, Nyendael says, that he has frequently gone a shooting into it; and, to ridicule their stupid credulity, has frequently turned back before he proceeded half-way in the track leading to the wood. At first they imagined he would instantly fall down dead, or be seized with some violent disorder; but perceiving that no bad consequences followed his boldness, their faith was somewhat staggered. The roguish priests, however, destroyed all his endeavours by their artful salvoes and subterfuges; affirming, that no inference could be drawn from the practice of a white man, their god not taking any concern about him; and that if a Negro were to attempt the same thing, the consequence would certainly be fatal<sup>a</sup>.

No women upon earth are more prolific than the females of this country. Here a barren woman is as rare as contemptible, the greatest ignominy being affixed to this infirmity, while a fruitful woman is held in the utmost esteem and adoration. Menstruous women are deemed unclean; they are prohibited from entering their husband's apartment, touching any thing belonging to his dress or diet, and even from cleaning the house; nay, they are frequently obliged to quit the house, and live solitary and deserted in another at some distance, during this period; after which, and bathing, they are again restored to their former privileges. If they are interrogated concerning the origin of circumcision, and this opinion, that women, during their catamenix, are unclean; they answer, that

*The women  
fruitful at  
Benin.*

<sup>a</sup> Artus loc. citat.

those customs were handed down to them traditionally from their ancestors <sup>w</sup>, yet are they bigotted in both as if they were supported by reason and the lights of nature and revelation.

The inhabitants of the kingdom of Benin seem less afraid of death than the other natives of the same coast. They are not terrified at its approach, ascribing the duration of life to the gods; yet they use the proper means to prolong it. Their first resource, upon their being seized with any disorder, is the priest, who here, as in several other barbarous countries, performs the office of physician. He first applies some green herbs of certain qualities; if these prove ineffectual, he has recourse to sacrifices, and appealing the gods. The speedy cure of the patient greatly augments the reputation of the priest; but if he recovers slowly, he is dismissed, and another called. If, after all endeavours, the patient dies, the doctor is never at a loss, any more than in Europe, for reasons in defence of his mal-practice. Notwithstanding this great confidence in their priests, little is done for them; they commonly are rich only in fame, the gratitude of the patient continuing no longer than the disease, and the sacrifices being offered at the expence of the priest, which frequently amount to more than his fee <sup>x</sup>. When any person dies,

*Deaths and  
burials.*

the body is washed carefully. The natives of Benin, who breathe their last in any of the other provinces of the kingdom, are brought with the utmost caution to the place of their birth, the body being first dried over a slow fire, then put into a close coffin, and sweetened with aromatics. As it frequently happens that a conveyance does not offer for years, the body all this while remains unburied, nor can the funeral rites be performed with propriety but in their native soil. The nearest relations of the deceased express their grief after various fashions: some shave their hair, others their beards, and others but half of either. The public mourning is usually limited to the term of fourteen or fifteen days <sup>y</sup>.

*Customs ob-  
served at  
the last ob-  
sequies of  
the king.*

When a king dies, his funeral obsequies are performed with some very extraordinary ceremonies. A well is dug before the palace, so deep, that the workmen are often suffocated in the pit themselves have made. It is so narrow at the top, that a stone of five feet in length, and three in breadth, will conveniently cover it; but its dimensions

<sup>w</sup> Nyendaël, p. 456.

<sup>x</sup> Ibid.

<sup>y</sup> Artus & Nyendaël, ubi supra.



at the bottom are very considerable. Here the body of the king is first laid, in the presence of a prodigious concourse of people of both sexes, all of whom contend for the honour of being buried with him. Such as are chosen for this high dignity are put in with him, and the grave inclosed by a stone. Next morning the nobles return, and, removing the stone, dip their heads in the water with which the pit is generally filled, and ask the persons buried with the king, whether they have met with their royal master. If they make any reply, the stone is again put in its former place, and they return next day to the same ceremony; otherwise, they conclude that they have met with the king, and are now attending him in his flight to eternity; upon which the solemnity is closed, and the rites are deemed duly performed<sup>a</sup>. Hence we may naturally infer, that they have an idea, however gross, of futurity, and that the soul or spirit exists either with or without the body. Barbot adds, that the ceremony being ended, the first minister, or one of the three great lords, go to the king's successor, who then comes to the grave, and, examining into the truth of the report, orders the tomb-stone to be laid, and upon it a banquet of the most delicate wines and sweetmeats. Every one eats and drinks heartily till night, when the mob, intoxicated with liquor, run about the streets, committing the wildest excesses and riots. They put every one to death that obstructs them, men, women, children, and brute animals, cutting off their heads, which they carry to the royal sepulchre, and throw in as offerings to the deceased king, together with all the cloaths and effects of those persons they have sacrificed to his manes<sup>a</sup>. Yet, amidst those barbarous and cruel customs, the kingdom of Benin is governed by laws which breathe nothing but humanity, and sympathy for misfortune and distress; witness their laws in favour of the poor.

The right of inheritance devolves in the following manner: when a person of condition dies, the eldest son succeeds as sole heir, but presents a slave by way of heriot or tribute to the king, and another to the three great lords, with a petition that he may succeed to his father's estate. The king grants his request, and he is accordingly declared lawful heir to his father. The fortunes of the younger children depend entirely on his pleasure; but the widow has by law a jointure proportioned to the estate, and her rank

*The right  
of inheritance.*

<sup>a</sup> Nyendacl, p. 460.

<sup>a</sup> Barbot, p. 139.

and quality. His father's other wives the son takes home, and, if he pleases, to his bed. The next a-kin succeeds to the effects of the deceased; but, in failure of heirs male, the king inherits<sup>b</sup>.

*Punishment  
of theft.*

The punishment of crimes is regulated in this manner: if a thief is taken in the fact, he is forced to make restitution, and is besides mulcted, if he happens to be rich; but if poor, he is beaten. If the robbery is committed upon a public officer, the offender is punished with death. However, the crimes of burglary and robbery seldom occur in this country. Murder is still less frequent: whoever kills a man, is punished with death; but if the murderer be the king's son, or some other considerable person, he is banished to the extremity of the realm, and conveyed to the destined place under a strong guard. None of them being ever afterwards heard of, it is concluded the guard has carried them to the Elysian fields, and the mansions of the dead. If a person dies of an accidental blow, his death is not deemed violent, unless blood appears; and the offence is bought off by burying the dead with decency, and then sacrificing a slave to appease his ghost. This atoning slave the offender touches with his forehead upon his bended knees, in which posture he remains till the slave is dead, and the sacrifice duly performed. Afterwards he pays a sum, proportioned to his circumstances, to the three great lords; which done, he obtains his freedom, and the friends of the deceased rest satisfied that he has fulfilled the law. Every other crime, except adultery, may be atoned for with money; where that is wanting, corporal punishment must supply the deficiency<sup>c</sup>.

*Four methods of  
purging or  
clearing  
themselves  
of crimes  
alleged.*

When a crime is doubtful, and the accusation not clearly proved, the method of purgation is practised in five different ways, four of which are admitted in trivial offences and civil causes, and the fifth in capital cases, such as treason, and crimes of a dark and deep complexion. In the first method of purgation, the accused is carried before a priest, who pierces his tongue with a cock's feather well greased. If it passes easily through, the person accused is innocent, and the wound will soon close up and heal without pain. Should he prove guilty, the quill remains fixed in his tongue, the wound cankers, and the accused becomes the sport and derision of the people. In the second method of trial, the priest takes an oblong piece of turf, in which he sticks seven or eight small quills: these

<sup>b</sup> Nyendaël, ubi supra.

<sup>c</sup> Ibid.

the accused draws out one by one : if they come out freely, he is acquitted, and his innocence untainted ; otherwise, he is convicted of the crime, and subject to the penalty. The third method of purgation is no less extraordinary : the juice of certain green herbs is injected into the eye of the suspected person : if the eye becomes red and inflamed, he is pronounced guilty ; otherwise his innocence is as clear as the sunshine. For the fourth trial, the priest strokes over the tongue of the prisoner three times an ignited copper bracelet, and he is deemed innocent or guilty according to its effects : his escaping without a blister is a certain criterion of purity, and the contrary as sure a proof of his guilt ; a method of purgation similar to the ordeal in England, and other European kingdoms. The fifth kind of trial, which is taken only by persons of rank, happens but seldom : here the accused is carried by the king's order to a certain river, whose waters have the extraordinary quality of gently wafting the innocent plunged in them to land, whether he has been taught to swim or not : on the contrary, the guilty never fail to sink, however well they may be skilled in this art. The river, which before was calm, immediately becomes turbulent and ruffled when a guilty person is thrown in ; but innocence preserves the waters in their former tranquillity. It is really amazing, that among nations endowed with common understanding, trials so ridiculous and absurd should be deemed proofs of innocence or guilt ; yet we see how prevalent they have been in all countries, as if folly itself had dictated those laws, the most essential to society, to happiness, and the dignity of human nature.

The fines charged on these crimes are thus divided : first, the person injured by theft has restitution made him either by receiving back the goods stolen, or out of the effects of the criminal ; the governor, next, has a certain proportion, and the remainder of the fine goes to the three great lords : as for the king, he has no share, the matter being carefully kept from his ear, yet do the great lords always make use of his name. If they are dissatisfied with the division made, they send a threatening message to the governor, acquainting him with the king's indignation at the small proportion of the fine allowed him. This intimation has its effect, and never fails of doubling the sum <sup>c</sup>.

*Fines upon  
crimes  
how dis-  
posed.*

<sup>c</sup> Bosman, Epist. 21.



*Religion.*

As to the religion of the country, it is so fraught with good sense and absurdity, that we are at a loss how to describe it. The fetisso is worshipped here, as in all the other countries on the western coast of Africa. They take every thing that seems extraordinary for a god, and make offerings to it. These, however, they consider in a subaltern capacity, acting as mediators between men and the great God, of whom their ideas are less gross and unworthy. To God they ascribe the attributes of omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence, and invisibility. They believe that he actuates every thing, and governs the world by his providence. As he is invisible, it would be absurd, they think, to represent him under a corporeal form. To every evil they give the name of devil, imagining that an evil-disposed, wicked, and malicious spirit, presides over all that is bad. This being they worship out of fear, and to prevent his injuring them. The devil, however, is not represented by any particular figure or image; he exists wholly in the mind, and the same idol is often worshipped for the great God and the devil<sup>d</sup>.

*Their ideas of God.*

God the Creator they call Ovisla, and think it unnecessary to honour him, because his nature is good and benevolent; whereas the evil spirit requires constant worship to check the malignity of his disposition. Nyendaël's account, however, differs from this, he asserting that both spirits are worshipped by sacrifices and offerings.

*Their belief in ghosts.*

The natives of Benin believe firmly in apparitions, and that the ghosts of their deceased ancestors walk the earth. They chiefly appear to them in their sleep, to warn them of some danger, which they are to elude by sacrifices. They never fail of complying with the spirits suggestion. They make offerings, and, if their circumstances are low, they will even borrow to enable them to perform that holy rite. Those offerings are generally of no very high value, consisting only of yams mixed with oil, which they place before the idol. Sometimes they sacrifice a cock, the blood is spilt for the fetis, but the fowl is kept for their own use. Annual sacrifices are performed with all imaginable pomp by the great: for these, they slaughter great numbers of sheep, oxen, cows, and all kinds of cattle. All their friends are invited to the festival, which generally continues for several days, and ends in distributing valuable presents to the guests<sup>e</sup>.

<sup>d</sup> Nyendaël, p. 413,<sup>e</sup> Artus, loc. ult. citat.

The Negroes of Benin place the seat of their bliss or misery in the sea. The shadow of a man they look upon as a real existence, which will one day give testimony of his good and evil actions. This appearance they call *passadoor*, and bribe it by offerings and sacrifices, since by its evidence they are raised to the highest dignity and pleasures of paradise, or sunk into the lowest abyss of wretchedness, where they perish through hunger and poverty.

All their houses are so crammed with idols, that it is difficult to find a vacant spot; but they have also particular huts, or little temples, appropriated for the residence of their gods. Their priests pretend to a familiarity with the devil, and the art of penetrating into futurity by means of a pot pierced at the bottom in three different places, from which they extract a dismal noise, the oracle of their feigned correspondent, which they interpret as they please. Nyendael alleges, that every man is his own priest; but this not only contradicts what he affirms in another place, but runs counter to the assertions of Barbot and the best authorities. Nothing, according to Barbot, is undertaken without consulting the sacerdotal oracle; however, the priest is limited to private affairs; if he meddles with politics, and utters oracles that affect the state, he is punished with death. The priests of the provinces are likewise prohibited, under severe penalties, from entering the capital; but no writer explains the reason of a law so whimsical.

The grand or high priest of Loebo, a town situated on the mouth of the river Formosa, is especially famous for his profound skill in magic. All the natives, the king not excepted, believe that his power extends over sea and air; that he can foresee or prevent the arrival of ships, shipwrecks, and innumerable other events of importance. His majesty of Benin, struck with the miracles he had performed, complimented him with the town of Loebo, and all its dependencies. He is considered as the head of the priesthood, and so respected, that no one approaches him without trembling; nay, the royal ambassadors presume not to touch his hand without leave, and tokens of the greatest veneration and awe.

This is not the only superstition to which the natives of Benin are addicted. Artus relates, that they stand in profound dread of a certain black bird which they worship,

<sup>f</sup> Nyend. p. 423.

and are prohibited to kill, under pain of death. This bird has priests appointed to attend him, to feed him, and to worship him in the mountains, which are consecrated to his use.

*The division of time at Benin.*

The Benians divide time into years, months, weeks, and days, each division distinguished by its proper term or appellation. The year is composed of four months; and the sabbath, or day of repose, returns every fifth day, which is celebrated as a festival with sacrifices, offerings, and entertainments. They have besides a great number of other days consecrated to the purposes of religion; and particularly one annual feast in memory of their ancestors. Dapper affirms, that, in this nation, they sacrifice not only a great variety of brutes, but offer likewise a number of human victims. These consist usually of condemned criminals, reserved for this purpose; and custom renders it necessary that twenty-five should be sacrificed to complete the ceremony. If the criminals should fall short of this number, the king's officers are ordered to run about the streets of Benin in the night, and to seize indiscriminately all those who are met in the dark: a ray of light will save their lives. The rich have the liberty of redeeming themselves and their slaves, on condition that they provide other sacrifices: but the poor die without pity or remorse. This method of seizing by accident turns out to the great emolument of the priests, who receive the price of redemption. They frequently deceive the people, pretending that they have secretly sacrificed those whom they have ransomed; a fraud that might justly be termed pious, or at least very pardonable, if they did it from motives of virtue and humanity, and not of gain.

*A barbarous custom at festivals.*

*An account of the coral feast, the greatest feast at Benin.*

But the greatest festival held at Benin is that called the coral feast. This, says Nyendaël, is the only day in the whole year on which the king appears to his people. Artus, however, affirms that he makes two other processions through the city. Here it is that he appears in all his grandeur, marching at the head of his women, who often exceed six hundred. At the coral feast he comes magnificently dressed to the second area of the palace, where his throne is placed under a rich canopy. All about him are ranged his women and officers in the richest attire; then the procession begins. This part of the ceremony ended, the king removes from his throne to sacri-



fice in the open air to the gods; an act of piety that is followed by the loud shouts and acclamation of the people. Having paid his devotions, he returns to his throne, and remains there till all his people have likewise discharged that duty. After which, he retires to his particular chamber, and the remainder of the day is spent in feasting and mirth. The king and nobility distribute wine and provisions among the people, and the day ends in gluttony, drunkenness, and riot.

Dapper describes the succession of the kings of Benin after the following manner. When the reigning monarch perceives his end approaching, he calls one of the onegwas, or three great lords, and imparts to him which of his sons he nominates to fill the throne, with an injunction, under pain of death, not to reveal the secret till after his decease. As soon as the breath has departed his body, the onegwa takes into his own custody all the royal jewels, treasure, and effects. The young princes, who are in the utmost uncertainty concerning their destiny, come and do homage to the minister, as the arbiter of their fate. When the time limited by law for declaring a successor draws near, the minister sends for the high marshal, and declares to him the last will of the king, which the other, to prevent mistake, repeats six times; then he returns to his own house with a solemnity adequate to the importance of the secret in his possession. Next day the minister orders that prince, for whom the crown is intended, to be called, and desires him to intreat the marshal to nominate a successor. The prince obeys, and solicits this request with the most supplicating air and manner possible. Six days elapse, during which the onegwa and high marshal are concerting the necessary measure for proclaiming the king. When the day arrives, the people are assembled, and the high marshal, taking the prince by the hand, names him six times, pausing after every repetition, and asking the minister if he has made any mistake. In the end the other princes are called, and, in a kneeling posture, are acquainted with the last will of their father. The young king then returns thanks to the minister and marshal for the integrity with which they discharged their office, then he is immediately invested with the badges of royalty, and receives the homage and allegiance of the great officers and nobles of the kingdom. This ceremony ended, he retires to the town of Oscebo, distant

*The laws  
regarding  
the royal  
succession.*

some miles from Benin, to reside there till he is perfectly instructed in the art of government, and the duties of a king. During this interval, the queen-mother, the onegwa intrusted with the king's last will, and the grand marshal, hold the reins of government, and possess the whole power and authority of majesty, their decrees being irrevocable by the successor, without their own consent. The young monarch, having finished his studies, quits Ofsebo under the conduct of the high marshal, and takes possession of the palace and ensigns of royalty at Benin. Here his first care is to murder his brothers, and secure his tranquillity, by removing every rival to the crown. Formerly this cruel usage was more limited, one of the family being generally saved; but these, in two or three instances, having raised disturbances in the kingdom, were the occasion of introducing a general massacre of all those who could form the least pretension to the throne. The bodies of the princes are, however, interred with all imaginable pomp; this bloody act being looked upon as a necessary sacrifice to the public good<sup>1</sup>.

*Nyendaël  
introduced  
to the king.*

When Nyendaël was at Benin, in the year 1702, he had an opportunity of seeing and conversing with the then reigning prince. He was about forty years of age, of an open countenance, engaging address, and affable manner. Nyendaël stood at the distance of thirty paces from him; but, that he might observe him the better, desired leave to approach nearer. The king smiled at the request, and, though unusual, ordered the Dutchman to be gratified. His majesty beckoned to him, and he came within eight or ten paces of the throne, in presence only of the three onegwas, or great lords, and a fierce-looking soldier with a drawn sword in his hand. He then presented the monarch with a fine silk night-gown; with which, he was afterwards informed, he was highly pleased, although, at that time, he expressed no marks of satisfaction, as it was brought to him covered; the usual method of making presents.

*Revenues  
of the  
crown.*

The revenues annexed to the crown of Benin are very considerable; every governor is accountable to the king for a certain number of bags of bujis, amounting to a large sum. The inferior officers pay their taxes in cattle, fowls, cloth, and other commodities. Thus the court is continually supplied with all kinds of necessaries; the overplus is sold, and the money put into the royal coffers.

<sup>1</sup> Dapper, p. 122.

Certain duties are also laid upon foreign trade, besides the annual taxes paid to the governor for the privilege of commerce, which amounts to a great sum. The king has only a sixth of this annual provincial tax. Notwithstanding those incumbrances on trade, the Europeans are treated with the highest distinction and most profound respect. Dapper represents the king of Benin as a prince so puissant, that, in one day, he can assemble an army of twenty thousand men, and in a few days more than one hundred thousand. Hence he is greatly feared and respected by his neighbours. While his general, called Occassary, is in the field, his pay and dignity are very considerable; but he has no share in the booty; all goes to the king. So strict a discipline is maintained among the troops, that quitting one post for a minute, without leave, is punished with death. Yet Nyendaël alleges, that the art of war is unknown in this country; and that the want of courage and conduct in his armies perpetually exposes the king to the incursions of pirates and robbers, who spoil and destroy every thing, sometimes to the very gates of the capital. When they engage in battle, they observe, says he, neither order nor discipline; they have neither generals nor officers; all are a cowardly tumultuous rabble.

*Power of the king-  
dom of  
Benin.*

*Their ig-  
norance of  
the art of  
war.*

The arms used by the Benians are swords, poniards, javelins, bows, and poisoned arrows. Every soldier has his buckler, composed of reeds, and of consequence so weak and slight as to afford but a slender defence. The nobles carry into the field fine scarlet robes to mark their quality. Others make use of a more convenient ornament, suits of armour made from the elephant's hide, adorned with the teeth and claws of leopards, the heads covered with helmets of the same materials, decorated with scarlet fringe and binding, to every one of which is suspended a tail reaching down to the waist. The military standards and colours are made of a fine silk, generally red, carried in the center of each corps and division of the army. The soldiers likewise wear sashes of the same, to which they hang their shields, their only defence against the poisoned arrows of their enemies<sup>a</sup>.

*Arms used  
by the Be-  
nians.*

These are all the particulars of this extensive kingdom, which we have upon the concurring testimony of authors. As for other particulars related by English, French, and Portuguese mariners, they have been generally refuted by Nyendaël. This gentleman frequently visited Benen, re-

*Conclusion  
of the his-  
tory of Be-  
nin.*

<sup>a</sup> Ibid. etiam Dapper, loc. ult. citat.



sided six months at a time; there is modesty in his account, and speaks not upon hearsay, but from his own knowledge: others, in general have indulged a wanton and luxuriant imagination; we have therefore rejected their accounts, excepting where they unanimously agree in their assertions; in which case we thought they might reasonably supply the deficiencies of Nyendacl, and sometimes be opposed to his relations, in cases where he would seem to be misinformed.

## S E C T. II.

*Containing the History of the Slave Coast; viz. the Geography of the Country; its Division into different Kingdoms; the Superstition of the Inhabitants; Wars between the Kings of Koto and Popo; the Commerce of the Inhabitants, and of the Europeans.*

*A general description of the Slave Coast.*

THE Slave Coast is generally included by European navigators under the limits of the kingdom of Benin. It is bounded by the Rio de Lagos in the kingdom of Benin, and extends to the Rio da Volta, the boundary on this side of the Gold Coast. The coast goes by the general appellation of Great Benin. From Port Douarre it extends towards the south of Cape Formosa; then turning eastward to Rio del Rey, and again inclining to the south of Cape Gonsalvo, towards the equator, it forms the gulph of Guinea. Thus, in its whole length, it measures about three hundred and fifty leagues, in a curve line, or arc of a circle<sup>a</sup>.

*Its division into different states.*

*Description of the kingdom of Koto or Coto, and its commerce.*

The Slave Coast comprehends the coasts and kingdoms of Koto, Poto, Whidah, and Ardrah. Authors are not agreed about the several limits of those kingdoms; nor is it material to the reader, since, under the general view of the Slave Coast, they will all be comprehended. According to Bosman, the Koto Coast is often called the land of Lampi by the natives. The country is flat, sandy, dry, barren, and without wood or trees of any kind, except the palm, or wild coco, of which it produces a great number. It is tolerably provided with cattle, at least as many as abundantly supply the inhabitants. Neither river nor sea fish are wanting; but the latter they are unable to catch, on account of the great agitation of the sea, and the prodigious surf on the coast. The whole commerce

of this kingdom is confined to the sale of slaves. Sometimes it affords more, sometimes less; in general, the number sold at a time is scarce sufficient to complete the cargo of a single ship. What renders this trade precarious, is a custom the Negroes have of flying into the interior parts of the country, on the arrival of the Europeans. Thus it frequently happens that a ship shall have staid six months on the coast without purchasing one slave. The Portuguese carry on the greatest trade here, and the natives choose to deal with them rather than with any other Europeans <sup>b</sup>.

Bosman describes the natives as good-natured, civil, and obliging; and Des Marchais observes, that we may safely like their manners, if we do not repose a confidence in them <sup>c</sup>.

*Disposition of the natives.*

In politics, religion, and œconomy, they greatly resemble the inhabitants of the Gold Coast, whose manners we shall have occasion soon to describe. In one particular they differ, which is in the number of idols kept at Koto. In the multiplicity of these consists their wealth. A Negro, that is not possessed of a dozen idols at least, is reputed poor, and his riches increase proportionably with his gods. Their houses, roads, and by-paths, are filled with images; whence we may infer how far their fetissos or fetiches contribute to their fortunes and happiness. Their language is the same with that spoken by the Negroes of Acra; and their commerce being limited to such commodities, it will easily be believed that few rich persons are to be found in this country; rich at least in the European sense of the word. The profits which they sometimes draw from the sale of slaves diminish in no respect their natural poverty; the whole being laid out in the purchase of idols, or materials for making their gods <sup>d</sup>.

*Religion, œconomy, and manners of the natives.*

As to their courage, it seems proportionate to their wealth. Having nothing to lose but what they are able soon to repair, they are indifferent about the defence of their property. Indeed the very quality of their effects is their best security. This appeared evidently in all their frequent wars with the kingdom of Popo, which continued, with short intervals, for a series of years. At present the king of Aquamboe, whose interest it is to hold an even balance between the contending powers, prevents the consequences of a decisive victory, by throwing his weight in the lighter scale. However, as long as Aquam-

*Their cowardice shewn in their wars with Popo.*

<sup>b</sup> Bosman, Epist. 18.

<sup>c</sup> Des Marchais, vol. ii. p. 4.

<sup>d</sup> Des Marchais, Barbot, & Bosm. *ibid*.

boe was governed by two monarchs, their quarrels were the occasion of much bloodshed; the old king taking part with his ally of Popo, and the young joining his forces to those of Koto. Upon this occasion it was, that, in the year 1700, the army of Little Popo having surprised that of Koto, obliged them to abandon their native country. In this state of exile they were on Bosman's arrival on that coast; but he doubted not that the Aquamboans would use their utmost efforts to restore the balance of power.

Des Marchais relates, that, before this event, the kingdom of Koto must have been wholly subdued, if the policy of the king of Aquamboe had not prevented it. He adds, that this last nation, being rich in gold mines, equally dreads the superiority of the one or other of those powers, or their entire reconciliation: for this reason he foments their quarrels, heightens their jealousies, but constantly keeps victory in suspense.

*Description  
of the king-  
dom of  
Popo.*

The kingdom of Popo or Papa, stretches from Cape Monte to the borders of the kingdom of Whidah; about ten leagues in length. It is divided into two provinces, Great and Little Popo; the latter lying eastward. Barbot affirms, that from Cape Monte, in the territories of Koto, to Little Popo, the coast, stretching north-east, is about five leagues in extent, the ground flat, sandy, and barren. He subjoins, that Little Popo is a very small province, bearing the title of a kingdom, situated between Koto and Great Popo on the sea-coast: however, he acknowledges that its limits within land are not distinctly known. Bosman reckons the distance betwixt Koto and Little Popo about ten miles, the country flat, without hills or trees, and so sandy that even the king's provisions dressed here are scarce eatable. This abundance of sand renders the land quite barren, and obliges the better sort of inhabitants to bring their provisions from Whidah. They are likewise pestered with an incredible number of rats, that burrow like rabbits in the sand<sup>f</sup>.

*Character  
of the na-  
tives.*

The town of Little Popo stands on a beach, in full view of the sea, four leagues west of the town of Great Popo. It is peopled with the remains of the kingdom of Acra, behind the Dutch fort there. Here they sought an asylum, after having been driven out of their own country by the king of Aquamboe, and, from appearances, it is probable they will never again be permitted to return to their native soil.

<sup>g</sup> Vol. ii. p. 6.

<sup>f</sup> Barbot, p. 329.



The natives of Popo depend entirely on plunder and the slave trade. In the former they are more successful than the Kotons, being more active, brave, and resolute. Their slave trade is not considerable, it frequently requiring a residence of some months to complete a cargo here. In 1697, Bosman could purchase but three slaves in the space of as many days, notwithstanding the assurances of the natives, on his arrival, that, in a few days, they would procure him two hundred. Without seeming to discredit their report, he went on board, and sailed for Whidah; he was afterwards informed that the Popons had returned from their incursions into the neighbouring countries, with above the number they had promised him, whom they afterwards sold to the Portuguese. They are uncommonly fraudulent and thievish; it is their usual practice to draw the merchant or factor on shore, under pretence of viewing a cargo of slaves they have ready for sale: having obtained this end, they detain him till they actually procure the number wanted, which they oblige him to take at the price they think proper to affix. No nation is so much despised by them as the Portuguese, yet no people deal so largely with them, a circumstance owing to the paltry goods with which they trade. These are refused by the natives of other provinces, and the Popons, who come easily by their slaves, part with them at a cheap rate, accepting in exchange any kind of merchandize.

*The natives maintain themselves by plunder.*

Four miles to the eastward of Little Popo are the boundaries of Great Popo. In the inland country are found plenty of fruits, roots, birds, and beasts; but the sea-coast is marshy, and of course low and flat; at the same time that it is almost inaccessible. The sea beats with so much violence against the shore, that boats and canoes dare not venture to approach it for the greater part of the year. The harbour of Little Popo is distant five leagues from that of Great Popo. In going eastward, the latter of these ports is visible at a considerable distance, particularly two flags, which continually fly upon two points formed by the banks of the river Tarri or Torri. Behind the east flag stands the Dutch factory, and at the mouth of the river the town of Great Popo, built in an island formed by a creek and marshes, that gives the country the appearance of a large lake. Hence the Portuguese call it the Terra Annegada, or the Drowned Land.

*Account of the kingdom of Great Popo.*

*Description  
of the town  
and royal  
palace.*

The town is divided into three parts, distinctly marked out. The mouth of the river is incommoded with a bar, which, however, the canoes can easily pass. The houses, or rather huts, are small. Des Marchais makes the whole strength of the town to consist in its situation, surrounded every where by the sea, or inaccessible marshes<sup>b</sup>. It is the only place in the dominions of Great Popo that merits the name of a town; all the rest are but little hamlets of two or three houses each; to which, on the least danger, the inhabitants of Popo retire. The royal palace is a large court composed of an infinite number of little huts or cabins, the principal apartment being in the middle, each having a guard of a company of soldiers. The king's particular house is adorned with a large saloon, reserved for public audience, and the entertainment of strangers. As the king always eats alone, foreigners are entertained by the lords and principal officers of the court. His majesty keeps a great number of women; two of which always attend his person, to cool and refresh him with fans, neatly made of reeds and feathers. His constant amusement, and indeed sole occupation, consists in smoking tobacco, toying with his women, and conversing with his officers upon the most trifling subjects. All the women honoured with the royal affection are entertained in the palace with equal profusion and variety of diet. All the country, except this island, is thinly inhabited, a circumstance owing chiefly to the perpetual incursions of the Negroes of Whidah; hence the grounds are uncultivated, provisions often scarce, and the people in danger of being starved, but for the supplies they get from their most bitter enemies, who run the hazard of an illicit trade for the sake of the great profits resulting from it.

This account of Bosinan differs very widely from what Barbot relates, and affirms with a minuteness of circumstances that adds to the credit of his report. If the reader will invert every particular of the foregoing account from Bosman, and conceive the country populous, well cultivated, and happy, he will have Barbot's idea of it. To reconcile relations so very different, we must suppose that the writers viewed this country at two very distant periods; the former after some dreadful calamity, and the latter in a flourishing, industrious, and peaceable reign<sup>c</sup>.

*The king-  
doms of  
Koto, Popo,*

All the voyagers agree, that the kingdom of Popo had once been so powerful as to compel the Whidans to pay

<sup>b</sup> Des Marchais, ubi supra.

<sup>c</sup> Barbot, p. 341.

a yearly tribute. Yet this appears to be a mistake, without any real foundation. It is certain that the kingdoms of Popo, Koto, and Whidah, were formerly provinces of the great kingdom of Ardrah, often in rebellion against their sovereign, but more frequently involved in war with each other. Its situation protected Popo; the number of its inhabitants was sufficient security to Whidah; and its poverty was the barrier of Koto. Thus those wars, supposed to have ended to the disadvantage of Whidah, were in part terminated by the acquisition of liberty to each, and their total dismemberment from the sovereign kingdom of Ardrah (A). Des Marchais, who here indeed appears to be a mere copyist, is of the same sentiments; but then he adds, that Great Popo was in subjection to Whidah till the time of the late king, who was placed on the throne by the Whidasian monarch; in reward for which he withdrew his allegiance, and established an independency.

*and Whidah, formerly dependent on Ardrah.*

The Whidan, enraged at this ingratitude, raised a powerful army, and was assisted with ammunition by some French ships lying before Whidah. With this army he marched against Popo, intending nothing less than the entire extirpation of that people; in which hope he was encouraged by the French, who promised to fall upon them by sea. However, the shallows round Popo prevented the approach of the ships by sea, and the marshes secured the city by land. Both the French and Whidans were obliged to make their attack upon floats. The enemy had thoroughly provided themselves before these could be got in readiness; and their liberty and property being at stake, they gave the allies so warm a reception, that, after great slaughter, they were defeated, and repulsed from the city. All this was done without the loss of a man on the side of the Popons; for they charged the assailants from under the cover of their houses, and gained a complete victory, without being once seen by the enemy. Since this unsuccessful attempt the king of Whidah has never ventured upon any enterprizes against Popo. He has indeed omitted no opportunities of fomenting divisions be-

*Wars carried on between Popo and Fida or Whidah.*

(A) This is the account of the learned Jesuit Cavazzi, who seems to have drawn his intelligence from the best materials, and the concurring tradition of each of the three countries. He is, however, extremely concise in this relation, which he touches upon only by way of digression from his subject.



between it and other neighbouring nations: intrigues which have already cost him immense sums, without his drawing a single advantage from them; nay, with the mortifying circumstance of being cheated, duped, and outwitted, upon all hands<sup>k</sup>.

*The chief  
commerce  
of Popo  
consists in  
slaves and  
fish.*

The natives of Great Popo trade in slaves, but not deeply. If no foreign ships arrive on their coast, they dispose of their stock to the king of Little Popo, who exchanges for them some of his European commodities. But the greatest trade of the kingdom arises from the fish caught on their coast, which they prepare and sell to other neighbouring kingdoms and foreigners. While it was dependent upon Ardrah, their commerce with the Europeans was inconsiderable, the king obliging them to preserve their slaves and fish, to secure the payment of his taxes; probable it is, that this tyranny was the cause of their revolt. Their natural propensity to theft and pilfering has prevented the English and French from executing their intentions of forming settlements among them. The Dutch, and now-and-then a Portuguese ship, are the only foreigners who run the hazard of trading with them; and they too under certain restrictions and precautions; such as that the king will charge himself with equitable arbitration of all disputes arising between them and his subjects, and give security for all debts they may contract. Since the last quarrel with Whidah, the trade has been so much on the decline, that the Dutch likewise had thoughts of abandoning it; and probably by this time Popo has no foreign commerce of any kind<sup>l</sup>.

*Their great  
respect for  
priests.*

The natives of Popo, like all the other Negroes on the coast, have a blind confidence in their priests. They call them *Domines*, a Latin term, which they have undoubtedly borrowed from some European nation. Those African prelates are usually clothed in long white robes, and always carry in their hands a kind of episcopal crozier. All the ships that trade here pay them a sort of duty, under the appellation of a present, to encourage the Negroes, by those marks of respect to their priests, to use diligence in completing their cargoes. In effect, those weak and superstitious creatures, persuaded that the intercession of their priests can alone procure them the favour of the Divinity, obey whatever they desire; and the priests finding their interest in obliging the Europeans, leave no means

<sup>k</sup> Des Marchais, vol. ii. part. v. Bosman, Epist. 19.  
ibid.

<sup>l</sup> Bosm.

entried to induce them to honesty and industry, although their natural depravity generally overcomes all other motives. While they are assisting the Europeans in loading and unloading the ships, a priest stands on the shore, employed in pouring on their heads a handful of consecrated gravel, which they esteem an infallible security for their canoes in passing the dangerous bar at the mouth of the river. To conclude; Popo is, properly speaking, the first country which can be called a province of Ardrah. They speak the same language with little or no variation, and the form of government is directly similar<sup>m</sup>.

### S E C T. III.

*Containing the Geography of the Kingdom of Whidah, with a particular Relation of its Rivers, Harbours, Soil, Climate, Produce, Towns, and Cities. Also an Account of the Government, Policy, Trade, Laws, Arts, Manners, Religion, and Customs, of the Whidans; and, lastly, the Revolution brought about in this Kingdom, from the effeminate Manners of the Natives, the Introduction of Luxury, and the martial Disposition of their Enemy the King of Dahomay, &c.*

THIS kingdom is called Whidah by the English, the Portuguese, and the natives; Juda by the French; and Fida by the Dutch. Phillips and Snellgrave write Whidaw; Smith and Atkins, Whidah; and Barbot, and some other French writers, alter the orthography to Ouida; yet Barbot allows, that the French, for the most part, call it Juda or Juida; but we shall not dwell upon such trifles<sup>n</sup>.

*Different names given to the kingdom of Whidah.*

Bosman, who spent three months in the country, took all imaginable pains to inform himself of its exact limits; but could never learn more, than that it stretches along the shore about ten miles, its centre seven miles inland, after which it branches out into two arms, each of which, in some places, are ten or twelve miles broad, in others much narrower. According to Des Merchaïs, it begins at the distance of five or six miles from Popo, extending

*Geography of the country.*

<sup>m</sup> Bosin. Des March. loc. cit. cap. 2.

<sup>n</sup> Prevost, tom. v. lib. x.

as many miles along the coast, situated under six degrees twenty-nine minutes north latitude. Its boundaries are on the north-west the kingdom of Popo, and on the south-east Ardrah. Some historians give this kingdom but six miles in circumference; others again extend it eleven or twelve miles along the coast. Upon the whole, its dimensions being so uncertain, we shall proceed to other particulars better known, and more universally assented to.

*Rivers.*

This country is watered by two rivers, which likewise run through the kingdom of Ardrah. The most southern is called the Jakin, and is only navigable by canoes: its waters are of a yellowish cast, in general about three feet in depth, though in many places much shallower. The other is called the Euphrates, washing with its stream the city Ardrah, and passing at the distance of a mile from Xavier or Sabi, the capital of Whidah: it is wider and deeper than the Jakin, and, but for some banks of sand that block up the passage, would be navigable for large ships. The kings of Whidah have from time immemorial exacted a sort of custom to be paid of two kowris or bugis to officers stationed at these fords, without which no man is permitted to cross the river. At the mouth of this river is the port where all ships load and unload. It is incommodious and dangerous on account of high surfs and a swelling sea, particularly in the months of April, May, June, and July. In this season dismal accidents frequently happen; boats are overturned, goods sunk, men lost, and the ships themselves in great danger of being driven from their moorings upon the shore. The natives, indeed, are so expert in swimming, that fewer of them than of the Europeans are lost.

*Strong currents and high surfs.*

Besides this high sea, there is a strong tide running east and west, which proves extremely inconvenient, as no boat or shallop can stem it by rowing. The method they take is to punt or push them forward by long poles; a method so slow and tedious, that ships are twice as long detained in port as otherwise the trade would require. However, on shore, the scene is changed from a dreadful swelling surf to a most beautifully enamelled meadow, covered all the year round with a fine verdure, that nothing can exceed. Round the coast the country is flat, rising by an easy and equal ascent towards the interior parts, that sets the landscape in full view, and presents a most



pleasing and rich prospect to the shipping. The height of the ascent is bounded by a chain of mountains that defends the country from its north-east neighbours: All the Europeans who have been in Whidah speak of the country with rapture, and extol it as the most beautiful in the world. The trees are strait, tall, and disposed in the most regular order, which present to the eye fine long groves and avenues, clear of all brush-wood and weeds. The verdure of the meadows, the richness of the fields, clothed with three different kinds of corn, beans, roots, and fruits, and the multitude of houses, with a dimpling stream, murmuring down the declivity to the sea, form the most delightful prospect that fancy can conceive: Every inch of ground is converted into use, except those places destined by nature for pleasure, where the woods spring up spontaneously in the most exquisite rural simplicity. A perpetual spring and autumn succeed each other; for no sooner has the husbandman cut his corn, than he again plows and sows the ground; yet is it not worn out; the next crop puts forth with the same vigour as the former, as if nature here were inexhaustible. Certain it is, the kingdom of Whidah is so populous, that one single village contains as many inhabitants as several entire kingdoms on the coast of Guinea; and yet they stand so close, that one is amazed how the most fertile land on earth can supply the number of people contained in so small a compass. One may compare the whole kingdom to a great city, divided by gardens, lawns, and groves, instead of streets; not a village in Whidah being a musket-shot distant from another. Some are the king's, some the viceroy's villages, and others are built and peopled by particular private families. The former are the largest and best built; but the latter the best cultivated, if there be any difference in a country so uniformly rich and beautiful. In a word, it is the true image of what the poets sing of the Elysian fields; and, to speak all its perfections, though the authority is undeniable, would appear to the reader as if we indulged a warm imagination at the expence of strict historical truth.

*The extreme beauty and fertility of the country.*

*The prodigious number of inhabitants.*

Notwithstanding the small extent of this kingdom, it is divided into twenty-six provinces, which take their names from their capital towns. Those small states are distributed among the chief lords of the kingdom, and become hereditary in their families. The king of Whidah, who

*Its division into twenty-six provinces.*

is only their chief, presides particularly in the province of Sabi or Xavier, that is, the principal province of the kingdom, as the city of the same name is the capital of the whole<sup>9</sup>.

*A great market held in each of the provinces.*

In the capital Xavier, or Sabi, a great market is held every fourth day, in the different streets of the city. In the other towns of the provinces they keep an aploga, as they term it, or a fair, where one seldom sees fewer than six thousand merchants. At Sabi the greatest markets are on Wednesday and Saturday. To prevent confusion, and the disturbance that might arise in the city from such a multitude of people, the market is removed at a mile's distance from the walls, to a fine large plain, several parts of which are adorned with groves of tufted trees, which afford a refreshing shade to the people. Here the king's women attend to sell their cloths, and their other manufactures. These fairs and markets are regulated with so much care and prudence, that nothing contrary to law is ever committed. All sorts of merchandize are here collected; and those who have brought goods are permitted to take what time they please to dispose of them, but without fraud or noise. A judge, attended by four officers armed, is appointed by the king for the inspection of all goods, to hear and determine all grievances, complaints, and disputes. To oppress liberty, and sell for a slave the man born free, is a crime of a black complexion, and always punished with death<sup>r</sup>.

*Account of the great market at Xavier, the capital.*

The market-place is surrounded with sutlers booths, and places of refreshment, for the conveniency of the people. They are only permitted to sell certain sorts of meat, as beef, pork, goats and dogs flesh. Other booths are kept by women, who sell maize, millet, rice, and corn bread. Other shops sell pito, or a kind of pleasant, wholesome, and very refreshing beer. Palm wine, aquavita, and spirits, which they have from the Europeans, are kept in other shops, with restrictions to prevent drunkenness and riot. Here slaves of both sexes are bought and sold; also oxen, sheep, dogs, hogs, fish, and birds of all kinds. Woollen cloths, linen, silks, calicoes of European and Indian manufacture, they have in great abundance; likewise hatd-ware, china and glass of all sorts, gold in dust and ingots, iron in bars, lead in sheets, and every thing of European, Asiatic, or African pro-

<sup>9</sup> Des Marchais, tom. ii. part v. p. 18. <sup>r</sup> Des March. tom. v. part v. p. 23. Barbot, ubi supra.

duction, is here found at a reasonable price. The chief commodities of Whidah manufacture are cloths, umbrellas, baskets, pitchers for pito or beer, plates and dishes of wood, gourds finely ornamented, white and blue paper, pepper, palm-oil, salt, kan-kis, and other commodities<sup>2</sup>.

The slave-trade is conducted by the men, all other things are sold by the women. Our greatest merchants might here receive useful lessons from those diligent and alert Negroes, both in the art of selling and of reckoning. Here they rely solely upon their own address and vigilance, making no account of good or ill fortune, which they think the necessary result of a man's own conduct. The money used in all bargains is gold-dust, which they reckon up with great dexterity, as every thing is sold by prompt payment. Bujis, which the French by corruption call bauges, pass frequently for money, at their fairs in the country: this is a small white shell, of the size and shape of an olive. In the kingdoms of Whidah and Ardrah these bujis serve equally for dress and money, for ornament and use. They pierce each shell with an iron made for the purpose; forty of them they string upon a cord which they call scuze, and the Portuguese toquos. Five of these strings compose what the Portuguese call a gallinha, and the Negroes a fore. By these the exchange of gold-dust is rated, and the price of slaves determined.

*The slave trade carried on by the men, all the other branches by the women.*

The Europeans, the nobility of Whidah, and all the rich Negroes, are carried, when they go abroad, in hammocks or litters on the shoulders of slaves. The contrivance of these is ingenious, and an excellent defence against the heat of the climate, which, says Phillips, is so great, that an European could not walk a mile in the middle of the day without fatiguing, and exposing himself to great danger.

Bosman says, that the inhabitants of Whidah exceed all the Negroes he had seen, both in good and bad qualities. All ranks and degrees of them treat the Europeans with extreme civility, courtesy, and respect. Other Negroes are eternally soliciting presents; the Whidans had rather give than receive. When the Europeans trade with them, they expect they should return thanks for the obligation; but their making a present to a white man they value as nothing, and are displeased at any acknowledgement for a thing so trifling. They have an obliging engaging manner of addressing each other, and a degree of subordinate

*Qualities of the natives.*



*Their ceremonious civility.*

respect proportioned to the quality of the person, that greatly astonished Bosman, among a rude people, as he first imagined them to be. When any one visits or accidentally meets his superior, he immediately drops upon his knees, kisses the earth three times, claps his hands, and wishes him a good day or good night, which the other returns in the posture in which he then happens to be, by gently clapping his hand, and wishing him the same. The other all this while remains sitting, or prostrate on the earth, till the superior departs, unless some urgent business calls him, in which case he makes his apology in the most submissive terms. The same respect is shewn to the elder brother by the younger, to fathers by their children, and by women to their husbands. Every thing is delivered to, or received from, a superior on the knee. When persons of equal condition meet, they each fall down, clap their hands, and mutually salute; the same ceremonies being nicely observed and imitated by their several attendants, a whole retinue of one hundred persons being down at once on their knees, a spectacle which might easily be mistaken for some public act of devotion. If a superior sneezes, all the by-standers fall upon their knees, clap their hands, and wish him happiness. In a word, no part of the world is more polite in the external ceremonies than the kingdom of Whidah. How a nation, confined to so small a spot of ground, should differ so far in manners from the surrounding kingdoms with which they have a constant intercourse, is not so easily accounted for. One would be led to think that this happy little people have a soil, a climate, and a nature peculiar to themselves. The natives of Whidah are in general tall, well made, strait, and robust. Their complexion is black, but no so glossy as that of the people on the Gold Coast, and still less than those of Senegal and the river Gambia. They excel all other Negroes in industry and vigilance. Idleness is the favourite vice of the Africans in general; here, on the contrary, both sexes are so laborious and diligent, that they never desist till they have finished their undertaking; carrying the same spirit of perseverance into every action of their lives.

*Their industry and commerce.*

Besides agriculture, from which none but the king and a few persons of the first distinction are exempted, they employ themselves in several kinds of manufactures. They

† Bârbot, p. 830. Bosman, let. 18.    ‡ Prevost, lib. ix. c. 3.

spin cotton yarn, weave fine cotton cloths, make calabashes, wooden vessels, plates, and dishes; likewise assagayes, and smith's work, in greater perfection than any other people on the coast. Whilst the men are thus employed, the women brew pito, and dress provisions, which, with their husbands merchandize, they carry for sale to market. Both men and women are employed in search of gain, and their emulation is equal to their industry. Hence it is that they live well, nay splendidly, when compared with the other Negroes of the coast. Labour is cheap here, the profits solely arising from the unwearied industry of the labourer \*.

Several travellers have, not unjustly, compared the manners of this people to those of the Chinese. The same laborious industry, ceremonious civility, jealous affection to their women, and thievish inclinations in trade, prevail in both countries. If the Whidahians meet an European twenty times in a day, the same train of ceremonies is repeated, the neglect of which is punished with a fine. The late king of Whidah carried this consideration of foreigners to such a height, that one of his principal officers was beheaded for presuming to lift his cane in a menacing manner over the head of a Frenchman. The chief director of that nation used all his influence to mitigate the punishment; but the king was inexorable, nor could any thing less than his life atone for so heinous a crime as a breach of hospitality \*.

The women till the land for their husbands, unless they happen to be very beautiful; in this case they are maintained at home with all the pomp of eastern nations, but with the loss of liberty also. They are never permitted to go abroad, but in company with their husbands, and close shut up in their hamars; nor can they receive any male visitors at home. Upon the least jealousy or suspicion, they are sold by their husbands to the Europeans. If in this country one person debauches the wife of another, he must himself not only suffer death, but his whole family are involved in the consequences of his guilt. Touching the body, even accidentally, of any of the king's women, is often punished with death, always with the loss of liberty; it is usual, therefore, with all employed about the palace, to keep continually calling out, as a warning to the women that a man is in the way.

*Resemble the Chinese in certain peculiarities.*

*The servile condition of the women.*

*The delicacy observed with respect to the king's women.*

\* Atkins, p. 116.

\* Des March. vol. ii. p. 184.

For this reason it is that the king is wholly attended by women, no man being permitted to enter the walls of the palace, unless to repair it, in which case the women are removed to some distant part. When the women go into the fields for pleasure, which they frequently do some hundreds at a time, upon seeing a man, they call out, "Stand clear:" upon which he falls on his face, continuing in that posture till they are passed by; for the slightest look would be criminal. On the smallest disgust his majesty frequently sells eighteen or twenty women, which by no means diminishes the number of his seraglio, their places being immediately filled up by fresh virgins provided by the proper officers. When a lady is presented to the king, he does her the honour of passing two or three evenings with her; after which she lives the remainder of her life with the chastity of a nun. Hence the women are so little desirous of being brought to the seraglio, that many of them prefer death to that confinement.

*The women exceedingly prolific.*

The women here are exceedingly prolific, and the men vigorous and warm in their constitution. In proof of the fertility of the one, and the powers of the other, Bosman relates, that the king assured him, before his whole court, that one of his viceroys, who had lately triumphed over the enemies of Whidah, had in his army two thousand of his lineal offspring, sons, grandsons, and their children.

*Dress of the natives.*

The natives of Whidah dress better and more sumptuously than any other nation on the coast; but they are unacquainted with the use of gold and silver ornaments, their country producing none of the precious metals. They wear five or six different suits at a time, the uppermost being seven or eight yards long, which they wrap round them in a decent and becoming manner. None are permitted to wear red besides the royal family, but all other colours are free. Nor are the women short of the men in the multitude of cloaths which they heap over each other. Their dress is becoming, but less decent than that of the other sex. Behind, their gowns are long and genteel; but before, loose and open, insomuch that many accidents occasion the discovery of parts which modesty and nature require should be concealed. It is alleged by the men, that this fashion was the invention of the women, for which doubtless they had their reasons. Men, women, and children, have their heads close-shaved, in which manner they go abroad under rain, wind, or the burning heat of the sun, without the smallest inconvenience;



venience: custom renders it familiar, and the practice hardens their constitutions. Phillips affirms that the women all go naked till marriage, and that this is the mark of their virginity; but this assertion is confirmed by no other author.

Des Marchais differs widely from Bosman's account of the Whidan dress. He treats this particular very explicitly; but how truly, must be submitted to those who have resided there. The royal dress and that of the nobility differ in nothing; but their form and value is unlike that of the lower class. Besides, he affirms, that the great wear bracelets and collars of pearls, gold, and coral; also chains of gold and silver. Their heads are sometimes bare; but, in general, covered with an European hat and feather. The same distinctions hold among the ladies.

Before we close this section, we shall remark, that the Whidans are to a degree rude and ignorant in some particulars. They have no equation of time; no distinction of hours, days, weeks, or stated periods. They know the sowing-time by the moon, or rather they sow as soon as they have reaped; and their markets they keep every third day: no other stated festivals of any kind being known. However, without pen, ink, or the assistance of an artificial arithmetic, they calculate the largest sums with great accuracy, state shares with the utmost exactness, and perform the operations not only of the first elements, but of the more complex rules of arithmetic, with a quickness that exceeds the most expert European arithmetician. Des Marchais alleges, that the wisest among them cannot tell you his age. If you ask, when such a man was born, he tells you, it was about the time that such a ship, or such an European factor, came to Whidah. From hence we may infer, that their history goes no higher among them than the living generation.

*No equation or division of time observed here.*

*The Whidans expert arithmeticians.*

But one of the surest characteristics of a Whidafian is his propensity to steal; in which they are infinitely more adroit than any other Negroes. On many occasions their address and refinement in this art are so great, that one would willingly sustain a moderate loss for the sake of the experiment. When Bosman was honoured with an audience of the king, his majesty told him, "that his subjects were

*Their great address in pilfering.*

“ not like those of Ardrah, and other neighbouring kingdoms, where, on the least umbrage they would poison an European. ‘This,’ continues he, ‘ you have no reason to apprehend; but I would have you take particular care of your goods; for my people are born expert thieves, and will steal from you while you are looking at them.’ This intelligence of the king was soon proved in numberless instances, in which Bosman was a sufferer by their art. It is a vice ingrafted in their nature, that, excepting two or three great persons, has seized all ranks of men throughout the nation. There is no security against their pilfering; locks and stone walls are nothing. Bosman says, that an English captain had put a sum of bujis, the money of the country into barrels; but while the sailors were carrying them on their heads to the sea-side, the natives made shift to penetrate the barrels, and ease the sailors of their load, by carrying off a great number of bujis; and all this unobserved. If complaint is made to the king, he orders the offender to be punished; but then no retribution is made, nor dare any one inform against the guilty, who is protected by the king’s eldest son, a sharer in the general plunder; upon which he has a certain tax <sup>a</sup>.

#### S E C T. IV.

*Of Polygamy, Nuptial Ceremonies, Circumcision, Husband’s Prerogative, Respect to Parents, Rules of Inheritance, Music, Air, Diseases, Burials, Religion; Fetiches, and especially of their Snake-worship.*

*Polygamy  
in excess  
permitted  
at Whidah.*

I N general, the customs of the Whidahians have a strong resemblance to those of the Gold Coast Negroes, except in the articles of religion, and the grounds of their manners. As to women, while the latter content themselves with one, two, or three, and the persons of the highest quality are prohibited from exceeding twenty wives, the Whidahians, even the poorest, have forty or fifty women. The great men keep three or four hundred each, frequently twice that number, and the king four or five thousand, but seldom fewer than three thousand. No people on earth perform the connubial rites with less ceremony. All bargains, contracts, jointures,

<sup>a</sup> Bosm. Epist. 20.

and portions, are entirely unknown to them. The Negroes of the other coasts purchase their women with cattle, fish, and other commodities; they are permitted to dismiss the woman, if she proves not a virgin: here the practice is directly contrary, and their ideas totally different. As a fertile womb is highly prized in Whidah, she who has given proofs before marriage of her fruitfulness is always preferred; but it costs nothing to obtain her. When a man likes a girl, he demands her of the parents, who never refuse their consent, provided she be of a marriageable age. Custom requires that the parents conduct her to the house of the bridegroom. On her arrival he presents her with a new dress, which is probably all she possesses; for every thing else she leaves behind in her father's house. The husband then kills a sheep, which he eats in company with his wife and her parents; which is the only time in her life that she is admitted to this honour. Some pitchers of pito are drank, the parents return home, and the marriage is concluded, without any other ceremony. A custom truly primitive and prudent in many particulars<sup>1</sup>.

Marriage.

A husband is permitted to repudiate his wife with as little ceremony as attends his marriage. He only thrusts her out of the door, and the separation is legal; but then it must be upon certain proofs of her incontinence. He also must pay the parents a sum double of the expence of the wedding. Another law, no less severe upon the women, is a strict prohibition, under pain of death or slavery, to enter the palace or the house of a great man, during their catamenia. Des Marchais is persuaded that the Whidians borrow this custom from the Jews. No sooner do they perceive themselves in those circumstances than they quit the house, and avoid all communication, and even the sight of men. Every family has a house where the women retire during that period, under the care of an ancient matron. Here they remain till they have washed and purified themselves, then they return to their husbands; and yet, what is very extraordinary, in spite of all these severe restrictions, the women of Whidah had rather not live than avoid intrigues. No women are more addicted to this sort of gaiety, for which they will run all hazards. This is a country, says Des Marchais, that furnishes the richest materials for the annals of gallantry<sup>k</sup>.

The husband has the power of repudiating his wife.

<sup>1</sup> Bosn. Epist. 20.

<sup>k</sup> Tom. v. lib. x. cap. 3.



*Circumcision used.*

All their children male and female, are circumcised in the manner we have mentioned in our account of Benin. Whence they derived this custom, none of them can tell; their usual answer being, that they had it from their ancestors. This operation is performed at no certain age, some undergo it at four, some at five, six, to ten years of age. Smith observes, that it is common to see in one family two hundred little children at play. He has known a man become the father of a dozen children in one day<sup>l</sup>. Hence arises the wealth of the parent, who has the power of disposing of them as slaves; which he commonly does, reserving only the eldest child. Thus this little kingdom can furnish a thousand slaves in the space of a month. In this particular Des Marchais contradicts all the other writers on this subject. He asserts that no people on earth shew greater indulgence, tenderness, and affection, for their children. They sell their women, he allows; but they make a wide difference between their wives and their children. The former are properly and by right their slaves; but as for their children, although they are born of a mother that is a slave, yet are they free. No difference is made between their legitimate and natural children. Here the Whidan law, says the same author, corresponds with the Jewish, and is equally binding to the prince, and to the meanest of his subjects; on the other hand, the veneration in which children hold their parents, is extreme. They never address them but on their knees; and the women are subjected to the same humiliation, all except the betas or priestesses. In this case, the law is reversed, and those sacred dames exact the same submission from their husbands, as they do from their wives.

*Power to sell their wives.*

*Great respect shewn to parents.*

*Ceremonies of address.*

The younger children pay great respect to the elder brother, and any deficiency here is punishable by a fine at the pleasure of the brother; but little regard is paid to the mother. Among the women, the ceremonies of address are the same we have mentioned of the men, making an allowance for the natural taste and refinement of the sex, which carries their politeness to a greater length<sup>m</sup>.

*Eldest son succeeds to the effects and wives of his father.*

At the death of the father, the eldest son inherits not only his effects, but also his women; with whom, from that day, he lives in quality of husband. His own mo-

<sup>l</sup> Bosm. p. 72.

<sup>m</sup> Des Marchais, ubi supra.

ther is excepted, who now is her own mistress, has a house appointed her, and a certain fortune for her subsistence. This custom prevails as well in the palace royal, as among the people. But subjects were never permitted to burn the house and sacrifice the women, as had once been customary in the king's family.

The extraordinary industry with which the Whidanese *Games.*

apply to commerce and agriculture, does not destroy their taste for pleasure. They will frequently hazard all they are worth at play; and after having lost their money and effects, will stake their wives, and even their children; nay sometimes themselves. So many disorders resulted from this passion, that the late king prohibited all games at hazard, upon pain of death. This law, however, died with him, and now gaming is as fashionable and as pernicious as ever. Some of those games are extremely ingenious, that in particular called atropoe, or the *six bujis*, has in the contrivance something peculiarly pretty and artful. They have besides games for exercise and trials of strength, activity, and courage. Their music is much the best of any to be met with in those countries. One instrument, that resembles a harp, is really musical: it is strung with reeds of different sizes, which they touch with great dexterity, accompany with a sweet voice, and dance to their own music in exact time, with an agreeable air and manner. They have likewise a kind of kettle-drums and trumpets, which they use in war; besides flutes and several wind instruments<sup>a</sup>.

*Music of the  
Whidans.*

This country has its peculiar diseases, as well as its games and pleasures. According to Smith, the air is infected with qualities of a contagious and malignant nature. Tradition affirms, that it received this noxious disposition since the ravages of the Dahomay monarch almost depopulated the kingdom, and left those lands uncultivated. Then sprung up a quantity of poisonous herbs, the exhalations from which tainted the air. This bad quality of the air produces violent effects, chiefly among the Europeans, and the only preventives are, keeping out of the night air; or, if necessity requires exposing one's self, wrapping the head and body warm, keeping the mouth as much shut as possible, and avoiding every kind of hard labour during the heat of the day. The Negroes are accustomed to bear the strongest heat of the sun upon their bare heads; but the experiment always proves dan-

*Malignity  
of the air.*

<sup>a</sup> Barbot, p. 373.

gerous to an European, producing ardent fevers, accompanied with a delirium, that usually carries the patient off in three days. These fevers, which may be termed endemial, prove most dangerous, and indeed always mortal, in the months of June, July, and August. They begin with cold shiverings and sweats, excruciating pains in the head and loins, hæmorrhages at the nose, a violent throbbing of the heart, a thirst that is unsupportable, a dry parched tongue, which in a few hours becomes quite black; with other violent symptoms. Dysenteries are likewise frequent and fatal in Whidah.

*The Whidaneje cannot bear the mentioning of death.*

The natives are diligent in the use of medicines, and offerings to their gods for the recovery of the sick. So fearful are they of death, that they cannot support the sound of the word, without visible emotion; and it is death to pronounce it upon any occasion before the king. Bosman relates, that in his first voyage to this country, he waited before his departure on the king, who owed him an hundred pounds: at taking leave, he asked the monarch who should pay him on his return, in case he died? All the by-standers were shocked at the question; but the king, who spoke a little Portuguese, told him "not to give himself any concern about that, for he should always live." The Dutchman perceived his error, took his leave abruptly, and departed. On his return he so frequently rallied them upon their weak fears, that in time the word grew familiar to the better sort; and the king, who was a jovial fellow, used to repeat it as frequently as any of them. But the people of meaner rank retained their old apprehensions, which nothing could remove. In general, the most violent prejudices accompany the blindest ignorance.

*Customs regarding burials and mourning.*

The burying-place of the kings and nobles is in a gallery, which the sons erect for their fathers. Here the body is laid in the very middle of the vault, and with it the buckler, sword, bow and arrows of the deceased. But though guns and pistols are used in the country, they are never laid in the tomb. A custom inviolably preserved by the heir, is, to mourn an entire year, during which period he roams about, secludes himself from society, quits his usual attire, his bracelets, chains and rings; and though at full liberty to enter upon his estate from the day of his father's death, yet so strong is affection, grief,



or prejudice, that he firmly and steadily pursues a custom, which at least has a great appearance of decency <sup>p</sup>.

As to religion, Bosman is of opinion, that the piety of this country is founded upon no other principles than those of interest and superstition. In the latter they exceed all other nations; "for allowing, (says he) the ancient heathens to value themselves upon thirty thousand deities, I dare venture to affirm, that the natives of Whidah may lay just claim to four times that number." However, he believes that they have a faint idea of the One True God, to whom they attribute omnipotence and ubiquity. They believe that a being exists, the Creator of the universe, to whom of consequence their fetiches are inferior; the thing made, to the Maker: but they neither pray nor sacrifice to this being. He is, say they, too highly exalted to take any concern about them; and the government of the world he leaves to the fetiches. To these, as the mediators between God and them, they apply themselves. It appears, therefore, that they look upon their fetiches as mere corporeal substances, but endowed by the Supreme Being with certain powers useful to mankind.

*Religion of Whidah.*

According to Des Marchais, the more sensible Whidans believe in one spiritual God, who punishes vice and rewards virtue; who causes the heavens to thunder, the clouds to rain, the sky to lighten, and the sun to shine. His residence is in the heavens, whence with infinite justice and goodness he governs the world. With such sentiments as these, one would think the zeal of the missionaries were unnecessary. They have confused notions of hell, the devil, and of departed spirits. The former they call a subterraneous abode, where the wicked are punished by fire; and this opinion has been confirmed among them by the arrival of a certain forcerer (probably a missionary) who pretended to have come from thence. There, he affirmed, he saw several persons of the court, whom he had formerly known, and particularly the late prime minister.

*The just notions they have of the Supreme Being.*

The fetiches of Whidah may be divided into three classes, the serpent, tall trees, and the sea; they sometimes add a fourth, namely, the chief river of the kingdom, the Euphrates. The serpent is the most celebrated and honoured; the other two being subordinate to the power of this deity. The snake they invoke in extreme wet, dry, or barren seasons; on all occasions relating to

*Their fetiches divided into four classes, viz. snakes, trees, rivers and the sea.*

their government, civil policy, and cattle; in a word, on all the great difficulties and occurrences of life. For this reason rich offerings are made to it, especially by the king, at the instigation of the priests, and persuasions of the courtiers, who reap the benefit of his devotion. Those offerings usually consist of money, pieces of rich silk and stuffs, all sorts of European and African commodities, live cattle, and elegant entertainments of all kinds of the best food. This snake has a large round head, beautifully piercing eyes, a short pointed tongue, resembling a dart; its pace slow and solemn, except when it seizes on its prey, then quick and rapid; its tail sharp and short; its skin of an elegant smoothness, adorned with beautiful colours, upon a light-grey ground. It is amazingly tame and familiar, permitting itself to be approached and even handled. The largest that Des Marchais had seen was about a yard long, and as thick as a man's arm. He adds, that they are extremely fond of rats flesh, and seem no less delighted with the chace than with the food. When they have tired their prey and themselves, they then kill and eat it, an employment that holds them long, as their gullet is remarkable narrow. When the snake chances to be on the top of a house, he is unable to disengage himself with the agility necessary for seizing on the rat: of this particular, as our author assures us, the latter appears to be sensible; for he has frequently seen a rat pass and repass in a sportive manner before the snake, as if it played with his embarrassment.

*The snake an inoffensive animal.*

These snakes have a mortal antipathy to all venomous serpents. They attack them wherever they find them, as if they had a pleasure in delivering mankind from their poison. The Europeans find no difficulty in familiarizing themselves to those inoffensive animals, with which they play without any dread or apprehension of danger. There is no fear of mistaking them for the poisonous serpent, the colour and size sufficiently distinguishing them. The Negroes entertain a notion that the first progenitor of this race of snakes is still living, and grown to an enormous bulk.

*Their notions concerning the origin of this worship.*

The worship of this snake the Negroes allege to be of very ancient date. According to them, they quitted another country where the people pretended to worship them, but were in truth unworthy of their sacred protection, on account of their vices and crimes. The Whi-

¶ Des March. ubi supra.

¶ Bosman, Ep. 20.

danese, charmed with the preference given them, received them with incredible marks of respect, and a hearty welcome. They carried them on a silken carpet to a temple, and paid them a worship due to their divinity. Certain it is, that the snake was worshipped first at Ardrah, though the date of this worship in either kingdom is uncertain. As the first temple in which it was placed was thought too mean for the residence of so respectable a deity, a resolution was formed to erect one more worthy of its dignity. A revenue was appointed for its support, with pontiffs and priests to attend it. Every year a certain number of beautiful virgins are consecrated to it. What is very remarkable, the natives believe this to be the very snake which their ancestors carried with them, when they gained a great victory over their enemies<sup>1</sup>.

The posterity of this noble animal is grown numerous, but nothing degenerated from the virtues of their ancestor. Although this chieftain snake be the most honoured, yet all the rest are likewise worshipped, fed, and fondled by the Negroes. No insult or injury dare be committed to it, under pain of death, by a native; and even an European who would be so hardy as to pass an affront on the deity, would run hazards from his votaries. When the English first settled in Whidah, the captain having unshipped his goods on the shore, the sailors found at night one of those snakes in their magazine, which they ignorantly killed, and threw upon the bank, without dreaming of any bad consequences. The Negroes, who soon discovered the sacrilege, and had it confirmed by the acknowledgement of the English, were not long in avenging the horrid impiety, by a method no less horrible. All the inhabitants of the province assembled; they attacked the English, massacred them all to a man, and consumed their bodies and goods in the fire they had set to the warehouse.

The kings of Whidah used formerly to make annual processions to the snake temple. These were celebrated with great magnificence, and terminated with rich offerings. Presents of great value were not only made to the deity and his priests, but to the nobility that assisted at the solemnity. The present king has broke through the custom of making this procession; and indeed seems tired of offerings attended with so great an expence and so little advantage.

*Tragical  
accident  
which be-  
fel the  
English for  
having  
killed a  
snake.*

<sup>1</sup> Des Mar. lib. x. cap. 4.



The king's expences in supporting the snake's household, and making him offerings, are, however, in some measure reimbursed by the revenue he draws upon his account. The manner of raising this revenue is this; annually, from the time the maiz or corn is planted in the ground till it grows to a great height, the natives imagine, that during this interval, the snakes make it their business every night to seize all the beautiful young virgins they can meet with, and make them delirious. Their parents then send them to a house appointed for their cure, where they are kept at a great expence for months, under the direction of the knavish priests, who fail not of making all possible advantage of the people's simplicity. The time thought necessary for their confinement being expired, and the pretended cure completed, they are dismissed, the parents first paying the charges of board and fees of the house. These are proportioned to the circumstances of the patient, and seldom amount to less than five pounds. As the number of girls throughout the kingdom who have passed this operation amounts to several thousands, we may believe the revenue drawn from a practice foolish only on the side of the people, is very considerable. The rich pay liberally. Most villages have an hospital, and the towns three or four each. Bosman says, that the whole booty is divided between the king and the priests. He tells us, that the people strenuously endeavoured to persuade him a snake was able to carry a girl away against her will, and in spite of all the bolts and bars with which they were able to secure her. The truth, however, is, that the priests diligently watch those young women who have never been in the hospital. These they first attempt by liberal promises, and, if these fail, by menaces; denouncing terrible execrations against them if they persist in refusing to comply. After they have persuaded the girl into their opinion, they order her to embrace the opportunity at night, when the way is clear, and immediately fall a screaming and howling, as if the snake had laid hold of her, and was carrying her off. Before relief can arrive, the snake is vanished, and the girl delirious, which obliges the parents to send her to the lazaretto<sup>1</sup>.

*The method  
of dedicat-  
ing virgins  
to the  
snake.*

The influence which those sacerdotal knaves gain over the understanding, is really amazing. By the time the

<sup>1</sup> Idem ibid. ubi supra.

girls obtain their liberty, they seem almost persuaded of the reality of the cheat contrived by the priests, and convinced that their brain had been actually disordered, and their person seized by the snake. However, to secure them against revealing the fraud, the priest never fails to threaten them with the most signal vengeance if they ever betray the smallest circumstance. Their menaces they have been known to execute, and women, who have blabbed the secret, have next day been found buried alive.

The daughter of the present king had been seized by the snake, Bosman thinks, by his own orders: she was conducted to the snake-house, where she committed all manner of extravagancies, while the music of certain instruments, appointed to attend her, was performing. She was visited by the most considerable persons of the kingdom, each bringing her presents worthy of her quality; a booty shared between the barbarous father and the priests. Her confinement was not so long as the usual time; but her madness, say the Negroes, must work out its destined period. Some, however, of the more intelligent, seem to look upon the whole as a pious and political cheat, but they find their security in professing their ignorance: those who have been hardy enough to shew their sagacity have forfeited their lives. An instance of this kind happened while Bosman was in the country. A Negro, born on the Gold Coast, lived at Whidah, and, by his address, obliging carriage, and conduct, arrived at the dignity of captain, and interpreter to the English. This man had married a woman of Whidah, who being seized by the snake, pretended to be delirious, upon which her husband, ignorant of the custom of the country, clapt her in chains instead of sending her to the hospital. The woman, enraged, complained to the priests, who had him poisoned in a few days; not caring to let him escape unpunished, or to execute public vengeance upon him, as his fault proceeded from his ignorance. Hence, says Bosman, you see how dangerous a thing it is to fall under the censure of ecclesiastics, even in the remotest parts of the world.

*The king's daughter confined in the hospital.*

Animals of all kinds are punished with death for injuring a snake. In 1697, a hog, that had been teased by one of them, gnashed and devoured it with its teeth. The priests carrying their complaint to the king, and no

*All the hogs in Whidah slaughtered.*

▪ Ibid. etiam Barbot, p. 391. Des March. Ibid.

*Familiarity  
of the  
snakes.*

one presuming to appear as counsel for the hogs, a warrant was obtained for a general slaughter of them all over the kingdom. A thousand Negroes, armed with cutlasses, began the bloody execution, and the whole race of hogs would have been extirpated, without remorse, had not the king, who was not of a cruel disposition, put a stop to the bloody scene, by representing to the priests, that they ought to rest satisfied with the vengeance they had taken. With this care and attendance these ridiculous deities multiply so fast, that the kingdom swarms with them. They are become a perfect nuisance from their number and familiarity. In hot weather they come into the houses of the Europeans, five or six at a time, and creep up the chairs, benches, tables, and beds, in which last they sometimes continue several days, and till they have brought forth young. Yet such is the veneration in which the natives hold them, that it would be running the utmost hazard to attempt dislodging them. Bosman relates, that a snake had taken up its habitation on a beam directly over the table where he used to eat. Here it continued for a fortnight, to his great uneasiness. But though it was within reach, no one durst presume to touch, much less to remove it. Some days after Bosman had the chief persons of the court at dinner with him. Speaking of snakes, he turned his eyes to that above their heads, and remarked to the company, that the poor fetiche over them, not having eat for several days, must be ready to perish with hunger, and was imprudent in not changing his quarters. They replied, that though he might not have observed it, yet the snake knew well enough how to come at his share of the provision.

This raillery was carried no farther at this time; but Bosman going to court soon after, told the king, that one of his fetiches was bold enough to eat at his table for fourteen days, without apology or consideration; and that it was but reasonable he should be paid for the maintenance of the deity: if this was not done, he should be under the necessity, he said, of dismissing this hardy intruder. The king, delighted with this pleasantry, agreed to the proposal, and accordingly ordered a fat ox immediately to be sent to the Dutchman's house.

If the snake is trod on it bites, but the wound is not poisonous. When the Europeans want to get rid of the company of the natives, they begin blaspheming against the groveling god; an expedient which effectually answers their purpose; the Negroes stop their ears, and hurry with the



the utmost trepidation out of the house. But though they pass over this freedom in an European, if a Negro was to take the same liberties, the consequence would be fatal. If a fire should happen, and a snake be burnt, the accident is heard with horror by the natives. They give money, by way of atoning for the crime of omission they have been guilty of, in not taking more care of the god. They farther believe, that the burnt snake will again return to life, and signally punish the carelessness of those who occasioned the calamity.

The service of religion is divided between both sexes. The priests and priestesses are so much respected, that their very office is a protection for all crimes. However, the present king once broke through this custom, with the consent of all his nobles: a priest having engaged in a conspiracy against the state and the king's person, he was seized, condemned, and put to death, together with a number of his associates. These feticheres, or *priests*, have, according to Atkins, a chief, little less respected than the king. This power frequently balances that of the monarch; because the notion that he converses familiarly with the chief fetiche, gives him, in the opinion of the natives, the power of doing them good or evil, either in extremes. Of this superstitious veneration the crafty priest knows how to make his advantage; equally obliging the prince and the subject to a subservience on his wants. This high dignity is hereditary in the same family; to which is annexed that of one of the lords of the court, and government of a province. All the other priests are subject to his jurisdiction. The sacerdotal tribe is exceeding numerous, and the males enjoy it by birthright. Their bodies are covered with marks, and the cicatrices of certain incisions, made on them in their infancy. Their habit differs in nothing from that of the common people; though, when their circumstances can afford it, they have the privilege of wearing the dress peculiar to the nobility. They have no determinate revenues or salaries, yet their income is very great, arising from fraud, ignorance, and superstition. They trade like other Negroes, and, by reason of the number of their women, children, and slaves, they are able to cultivate large plantations, feed a multitude of cattle, breed slaves, and sell them to vast advantage; methods which equally augment their power and raise their fortunes: however, their most certain re-

*The regard in which priests are held.*

*The revenues of the priests.*

sources consist in the credulity of the people, whom they pillage, by their artifices, at discretion. Most of the nobility who have understanding and spirit, regard them as vile and impudent impostors; but their sentiments they are forced to utter with great caution; for in this country poison is the priestly weapon, no less terrifying than the anathema of the conclave has been in the blind and ignorant ages of Christianity. They pretend a great regard for the Europeans, in order to gain their confidence, but their sentiments are very wide of their professions. The timid superstition of the people, and the influence they have acquired by the fetiche, the grand instrument of their hypocrisy, afford them an opportunity of committing the blackest crimes, under the pretext of religion and the public good. One would almost think, that the priests of more civilized nations were here delineated\*.

The great  
regard  
paid to the  
priestesses.

The women promoted to the dignity of betas, or *priestesses*, immediately assume dignity, even though born of slaves and the dogs of mankind. They are often more respected than the priests, and claim to themselves the appellation of the children of God. While other females pay the most slavish obedience to the will of their husbands, these arrogate to themselves an absolute and despotic sway over them, their children, and effects.

Des Marchais thus relates the ceremonies observed in the election of priestesses. Every year they chuse a certain number of young virgins, who are separated from the rest of the sex, and consecrated to the snake. The old priestesses are charged with this business. They begin at the time when the corn first buds forth, retiring first to their habitations, situated at a short distance from the town. Armed with clubs they sally out from thence like furies, enter the town, and run about the streets, crying out, nigo badiname, *stop them! seize them!* All the girls from eight to twelve years of age, whom they are able to catch, are their property by law; and, provided they enter not into courts or houses, no one is permitted to resist or oppose them. Their attack is supported by the priests, who, without pity, kill all those who presume to defend themselves from the blows of those remorseless gorgons. The young captives are conducted by those old beldames to their abodes; their apartments are assigned them, where they are instructed in the mysteries of religion, or rather of fraud, vice, and hypocrisy, and marked

\* Ibid. etiam Bosman, Epist. 20. Barbot. p. 394.

with the image of the serpent; the parents are made acquainted with the place of their retirement, and far from lamenting their fate, are overjoyed with the honour done their family, and the good fortune of their daughter; nay they frequently voluntarily offer to dedicate them to the snake. If the old priestesses should happen to fail of seizing in the city the number of virgins required, they then make excursions into all parts of the kingdom, which generally continue four or five days<sup>r</sup>.

At first the young ladies are treated with abundance of tenderness; they are taught to sing and dance at the sacrifices, and, after a complete education, they are permitted to reside with their fathers, under the restriction of returning at appointed periods to their duty. As for the old priestesses, they are composed of such as have either lost their husbands, or were never married, possessing all the virulence, rancour, and malignity, inseparable from the breast of an old virgin, envying the happiness of others, unworthy of felicity themselves, and equally hated and despised by all mankind. To conclude this account of religion, to the other accomplishments of the young lady are superadded the arts of love and gallantry. They are taught by the old bawds to wheedle, to toy, and to counterfeit the transports of the most violent passion. Thus they raise the price of their favours, share in the booty, and encourage the girls to compliance, by promising them they shall be amply rewarded in the great fetiche's country; yet, where their interest is not concerned, they are the most vigilant guardians of virgin honour, more out of spite than principle, less from virtue than envy of those joys of which they can never participate.

*The accomplishments  
taught  
them.*

As to the worship of trees, toads, and the sea, it is less in esteem than the former. These deities are only used upon less occasions, subordinate to the supreme culture of the snake, but superior to their accidental and transient gods of wood and stone. The sea, however, has solemn offerings made to it, sacrifices, and annual processions; probably arising from the terror of the scene in tempestuous weather, or from the benefits they derive from it, either by fishing or by commerce. Trees are worshipped in a still inferior manner: the respect paid to them would appear to arise chiefly from their excessive veneration for the snake, who usually takes up his abode in groves, where likewise are built his temples; a cir-



cumstance which seems to give weight to the supposition. In the last class of their great and fixed gods is the toad ; an animal deified, probably, for the same reason as an ape in Egypt. But farther reflections we shall leave to the suggestion of the reader.

## S E C T. V.

*Detail of the Civil Government of the Whidans ; Revenues of the Crown ; the Military Force of Whidah ; the extreme Veneration of the Whidans for their King ; and lastly, an Account of the Climate, Soil, Produce, &c. of the Kingdom.*

*The government of Whidah.*

THE supreme authority here is lodged in the hands of the king and nobles. By their joint concurrence every thing civil and military of consequence to the state is transacted. In criminal cases the king assembles his council, lays open the case, receives their sentiments, and recapitulates them before he proceeds to judgment. If a majority fall in with his own opinion, he follows it ; if otherwise, and the majority should dissent from him, their sentiments determine his verdict ; yet has he an absolute power even in this case, as his nobles are generally too polite to differ in opinion from their prince<sup>2</sup>.

*The punishment of crimes.*

Few crimes are made capital in the kingdom of Whidah. Murder only, and adultery with the king's women are made so by law ; although other trespasses against religion and the state are frequently punished with death. Murders are so rare, that in the space of six years, only two instances happened in the whole kingdom, and one of these proved merely accidental. The law is extremely rigorous in cases of adultery. This makes the women circumspect in their intrigues, but does not prevent them ; their ardour seeming to be increased by the difficulty and hazard. The king's women are above all others cautious, yet of all others the most addicted to gallantry when an opportunity offers. A few years since a young fellow, in a female habit, was taken in the palace, after having debauched several of the most beautiful princesses. Fearing a discovery, he passed into another quarter of the palace, where he was found next day, and taken in bed with a young lady. He was instantly seized and carried to pu-

<sup>2</sup> Des Marchais, liv. x. chap. 6.

nishment; but the most cruel torments could not oblige him to reveal the names of those who had granted him favours. In the midst of the flames he was observed to smile when he saw those persons, who had fondly embraced him a little before, now the busiest in bringing fuel to the fire that was consuming him. Being asked the reason of a conduct so unseasonable, he declared it, but without betraying those inconstants<sup>a</sup>.

When any of the king's women is proved unfaithful, he leaves it to the rest to pronounce upon her fate. The punishment is seldom the less cruel; for they think they cannot more strongly prove their own fidelity than by the severity of their sentence; besides the corporal torture and death inflicted on the criminal, the women go in bodies of two or three hundred to pillage, spoil, and raze to the ground the house of the unfortunate person.

*Punishment  
inflicted on  
adulterers.*

The king has a very extraordinary manner of humbling the pride of his nobles, when they fall under his displeasure, or when their arrogance is overweening. It is seldom, however, practised; for though he is despotic, yet does he stand in awe of a body who have so strong an influence over the people. To give a colour of justice to his pretences, he detaches two or three thousand women to ravage the lands of those who are wanting in respect and duty, or who reject reasonable proposals. Such is the veneration for these women, that no one dare presume to touch or oppose them, without adding to the former offence, by a new crime of a more heinous nature, and such as would be condemned by the kingdom in general. Thus the haughty nobleman finds it necessary either to submit, or be devoured by these legions of female furies, who burn and destroy with a bitterness proportioned to their natural weakness. Almost all other crimes are punished by pecuniary fines, which make no contemptible part of the king's revenue<sup>b</sup>.

*Method the  
king takes  
to humble  
the nobles.*

When an accusation is unsupported by proofs, the suspected party justifies himself by his fetiches, or by another method of purgation extremely common, and similar to the method used at Benin. Notwithstanding the accused is acquitted, after trial, by purgation, yet he is obliged to pay a certain sum into the king's coffers; and Bosman takes this to be the origin and cause of continuing the custom. The viceroys have the same power in their governments, and make a perquisite of all fines imposed

*Fines im-  
posed on  
accused  
persons.*

<sup>a</sup> Bosman, Epist. 20.

<sup>b</sup> Des March. *ibid.*

on criminals. Barbot takes notice of a remarkable kind of obligatory custom among them. This method of compact they call *boire dios*, from a mixture of French and Portuguese. Each of the parties digs a little pit in the ground, which he sprinkles with his blood, and mixing up a small cake of the earth and blood, he exchanges it for that made by the other party: they each swallow the cakes, and hence enter into the most solemn obligation that can be taken.

*Their great regard for liberty.*

Although credit in trade is seldom given, yet they are sometimes forced to deal in that manner. If the debtor proves insolvent, the king vests the creditor with a right to dispose of him, his children, wives, and effects, to any purchaser who will pay the debt, or a certain part of it. Thus the creditors enjoy a very extraordinary privilege, with which neither the king or the nobles can dispense. If the creditor demands before witnesses the sum due to him three times, and is not paid, he may seize upon the first slave he meets, without enquiring whose property it is. This law arises from their great regard for liberty, thinking it more just that property should answer the payments of debts, than that freedom should be made the price of folly or youthful extravagance. When the creditor lays hands on his prey, he ought to pronounce audibly, in the presence of credible witnesses, "I arrest this slave for a certain sum due to me." The master of the slave is forced to pay the sum in twenty-four hours, else the creditor may sell him, to pay himself. Thus the master of the slave becomes the debtor, and the creditor generally takes care to seize on the slave of some rich and responsible man. As is the case with all laws, this has its advantages and disadvantages; it preserves liberty to those born free, and his right to the creditor; but then it subjects the rich to the debts of the poor, and obliges the industrious to pay for the indolence of the extravagant.

*Punishment of murderers.*

Des Marchais observes, the *lex talionis* is here in use: murder is punished by the death of the murderer; and if a person is maimed or deprived of the use of a limb, if he be hurt or mutilated in any of his members, the punishment is made to correspond as nearly as possibly to the offence. By strong intercession, the king sometimes alters the sentence of mutilation for banishment. The criminal is sold to the Europeans; his family and effects are confiscated to the king; and thus the innocent are involved in the chas-



tisement of the guilty. Incendiaries are punished by fire. The crime is not common in the country; but if theft were punished with the same severity, the kingdom of Whidah must have long since been a desert: however, if a thief be convicted of the crime, and unable to make reparation, he is sold for a slave<sup>c</sup>.

With respect to succession, the crown is hereditary, passing inviolably to the eldest son; yet the nobles arrogate to themselves the power of choosing one of the younger brethren, upon extraordinary occasions. In all the countries inhabited by Negroes, from Senegal to the Rio Volta, the succession may descend to the children of the sister, notwithstanding the kings are always of the blood royal, and as near a lineal descent as possible. In Whidah there is no reserve, but that the crown descend to the first-born of the king, after his accession, those of an earlier birth being entirely excluded. Another law, no less sacred and inviolable, is, that the moment the heir apparent sees the light, the nobles convey him to the province of Zinghè, on the frontiers, where he is educated as a private person, without regard to, or even knowledge of his rank, quality, and pretensions, or the smallest instruction in the art of government. No one has the liberty of visiting, or being visited by him. Those charged with his maintenance, education it cannot be called, are not ignorant of his rank; but they are prohibited, under pain of death, from giving him the slightest hint of his birth, or from treating him otherwise than as their own child. The king, who at present fills the throne, was found at his father's death attending the hogs of his governor. His surprize was inconceivable, when the nobles made him acquainted with his fortune; nor could they for a long time prevent his imagining it a mere delusion. It is no difficult matter to penetrate into the reasons for so singular a custom. When the young king is called to the government of a kingdom, to whose maxims, policy, and laws he is an entire stranger, he is constrained to rely on the advice of his nobles upon all occasions, and in fact to put the reins of state into their hands. Thus their power is perpetual, like their rights to their private estates. The eldest son is always called to the throne; and his ignorance of the world gives the nobles the authority, to him only the name of a monarch; yet is the king despotic and arbitrary.

*Right of  
succession to  
the crown.*

<sup>c</sup> Des Marchais, tom. ii. p. 177.

The young king is not crowned upon his accession to the throne; that is, on his arrival from Zinghè; for he generally passes several months, and frequently years, before the performance of that ceremony. The nobles, who have the power of fixing the time of coronation, prolong their own; but without being able to exceed seven years, during which interval, the government of the kingdom is wholly in their hands, nor is the king's name so much as mentioned in public acts and instruments; yet is he attended with all the external badges of majesty, without daring to stir out of the palace. At length when the long-expected day for his coronation arrives, he assembles a council of the nobles, and approves their conduct during their administration, rectifying all the laws and acts of the interregnum. A discharge of eighteen pieces of cannon gives notice, at eight at night, that the council is broken up; immediately a shout of joy is spread over the capital, and in a short space communicated to the most remote parts of the kingdom.

Next morning the high-priest waits on the king, to mind him of the homage due to the great *feriche*, or *serpent*; telling his majesty, that as it is well known this deity is dumb, he cannot be surprised that he makes known his intentions by the tongue of his minister. If on this occasion he should demand the women most beautiful in the *seraglio*, and dear to the king, they must be surrendered to him; however, he seldom pushes his authority to so great a length. On the coronation of the present king Amer, the high-priest modestly contented himself with an offering of a horse, a cow, a sheep, and a fowl. These animals were sacrificed before the palace, and carried with much ceremony to the most public parts of the city. On each side of the sacrifice were placed two millet-cakes, baked in palm-oil; the high-priest girded with his own hands a staff nine foot long, upon which he hoisted a large silken ensign or flag; the whole ceremony being accompanied by the music of tabors, flutes, trumpets, and the acclamations of the people. After this the carcases were abandoned, a prey to the birds, the Negroes being prohibited, under severe penalties, to meddle with any part of them. While the victims were thus exposed to public view, the king's women of the third class, or those who from age, or other reasons, were incapable of administering to his pleasure, marched out of the palace under the escort of a file of musqueteers,

and

and preceded by music. The chief of the women leads up the rear, carrying in her arms the statue of a child, in a sitting posture, which on her arrival at the place of sacrifice, she lays down upon the victims; each of them sing a hymn, which perfectly accords with the instrumental music, and forms a concert not disagreeable. While they pass, all the people prostrate themselves on the ground, with great devotion and loud shouts, and their return is notified to the king by a general discharge of artillery, which concludes the procession.

Next day, the nobility crowd to the palace, with all the state and magnificence of dress and equipage they can afford; a fine band of music in great order marches before them, and a great body of men slaves armed behind. Advancing towards the throne, they prostrate themselves in a humiliating manner, and retire in the same order. In the mean while the women abandon themselves to the most riotous mirth; the canons are fired; the whole kingdom is filled with tumultuous joy; and this confused state of things continues for the space of five or six days.

As soon as the nobles have done homage, they dispatch one of their number to the king of Ardrah, attended by a splendid retinue, to request his majesty, to send a certain nobleman of his kingdom, in whose family the honour is hereditary, to crown the king of Whidah. This officer of state, with all his retinue, is supported at the expence of the young monarch, and he is treated on his journey with the most profound respect. Two miles from Xavier, he meets with horses and carriages to conduct him to the palace, after he has first staid four days in the village nearest the capital. All this time none of his attendants are permitted to enter the city, and it would be death to infringe this custom. Here he receives the compliments of the Whidan nobility, who load him with respect and caresses. The king sends him twice every day great quantities of wine and provisions, which are carried by his discarded women, in platters and vessels upon their heads, under a strong convoy, and preceded by music. This quarantine being performed, the king invites him to the capital, assuring him that he will be received with joy, and have apartments suited to his dignity in the palace. The Ardran nobleman receives the king's message with great solemnity, telling the ambassador, that he is all obedience to the commands of the king of Whidah, but that he must wait for instructions from his court, relative to the

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the late treaty concerning the reparation of the great gate of Assem, the capital of Ardrah. On receiving this notice, the king sends commissioners to Ardrah, charged with the reparation of the gate; when, upon their return, with a proper officer to certify their having executed the treaty, the Ardran nobleman at length enters Xavier, and proceeds to the coronation. All the nobility, attended by their usual trains, and prodigious crouds of the populace, go to meet and conduct him to the city, where he is received with the discharge of artillery, the cries of the king's women, and the shouts of the populace. The king congratulates him on his safe arrival, and orders him to be attended by his own officers and servants. Every morning the same compliments are repeated, and on the third day he is admitted to an audience, a ceremony conducted with great pomp and solemnity, the Ardran preserving his dignity, and talking upon an equality with the king. For the five first days he neither receives nor makes visits to the nobility, who, with the people, are busied in processions to the temple of the grand snake, imploring that divinity, that their young master may reign with the goodness, the mildness, and equity, of his predecessors, cultivate trade, observe the laws, and maintain the people in the full enjoyment of their rights and privileges. This is the labour of the day; the nights are employed at their windows, in singing, dancing, shouting, accompanied by the acclamations of the populace, and continual peals of loud music and artillery. Strangers, not accustomed to this wild medley and uproar, are in danger of being stunned and confounded with the horrid noise and tumult. On the fifth day in the evening, the people are advertised, by the firing of nine great guns, that the coronation will begin the following day, that the king will appear on his throne in the great court of the palace, and that the gates will be thrown open to all strangers as well as subjects: at the same time, the prince sends a special message to the European factors, requesting the favour of their company to assist at the solemnity. The preceding night is spent by the nobility in the company of the Ardran ambassador, where the conversation is grave, polite, and easy, interrupted by frequent prayers to the fetiche, by way of interlude, each of them forming an essential part of the ceremony. On the sixth day, at five in the evening, the king, attended by some of his favourite women, comes out of the palace. They are dressed in rich silk habits taken  
out

out of his majesty's wardrobe, or presented to them by the European factors, together with gold necklaces, ear-rings, bracelets, and other valuable trinkets. The king is also decked out in the most magnificent manner, having on his head a gilt helmet stuck with red and white feathers. In this manner he traverses the great court before the palace, and afterwards seats himself on his throne, which is no more than a large elbow-chair, on which are painted the arms of France, a circumstance that shews it to have been a present from the French West India company. Here the English, French, and Dutch factors, have honourable places, and chairs seated for them, while the Portuguese director is forced to stand with his head uncovered; and so low has the credit of this nation sunk at Whidah, that if a Negro strike a Portuguese, the latter has not the liberty of returning the blow; whereas any other European may put him instantly to death.

What merits particular notice in this ceremony, is the custom of having two dwarfs standing before the king, who alternately represent to him the qualities of his predecessors, admonish him to follow their example, to make his people happy, and to build his own security and power upon their affections; these little animals concluding their harangue by wishes for his prosperity, long life, and the happy continuance of his reign. As soon as the introductory ceremonies are finished, the Ardran ambassador enters the court, attended by music, a grand retinue, and repeated discharges of all the artillery in the city. He approaches the throne without any other reverence but a slight bow, or inclination of his head. After a laboured discourse upon the ceremony which he has the honour of performing, he takes in his hand the king's helmet, and turns it towards the people: upon a signal given, the music ceases, and the acclamations and noise are succeeded for a few minutes by a profound silence. Then the Ardran pronounces with a loud and clear voice, "People! behold your king: be faithful to him; pray for him, and your prayers will be heard by the king of Ardrah, my royal master." After repeating this short speech three times, he puts the helmet on the king's head, and then steps back to prostrate himself, and pay the homage now due to him as a king. The great guns, the musqueteers, the music, and the acclamations again resound; and the whole city echoes with demonstrations of joy: the ambassador retires, and the king with his women returns peaceably to the palace; the Europeans attend him to the gate; and there take leave with

with profound respect. All the ornaments used in the ceremony become the property of the Ardran nobleman; but as the political superstition of the priesthood drew unhappy presages from that custom, the Ardran now contents himself with a rich present the king makes, and five slaves, or their value in merchandize: the rest remains with the priests, under the notion of its being consecrated to the fetiche.

A day or two after his coronation, the king distributes presents among the nobility of the realm, which are returned by others of much greater value. Five days are spent in rejoicings; and the ceremony terminates with a solemn procession to the Snake Temple. Upon the whole, the priests never omit an opportunity of profiting by the superstition of the people. All festivals and public occasions end in offerings to the snake, or rather in perquisites to the artful and cunning ministers of this reptile deity.

*Revenues  
due to the  
crown.*

As to the revenues of the crown, Des Marchais, without determining the precise sum, assures us, that they amount to a very considerable fund, by the taxes on the people, and the duties on merchandize. Besides this, large sums are got by fines imposed on criminals, and the confiscation of their goods, chattels, and women, whom the officers of the crown sell for slaves. The crown has lands unalienable from it, not only in the vicinity of the capital, but in the remote provinces of the kingdom, and from these the palace is supplied with all necessaries. When the quantities sent in exceed the demand, the surplus is sold to great advantage, and hence arises no inconsiderable part of the revenue. These lands are cultivated at no expence; so absolute is his power, that the subjects cannot perform their own most necessary affairs, till they have first done the king's business. Their corn lies rotting on the ground, while they are cutting his; and their families would starve while they are supplying the court with superfluities, if the fertility of the soil did not ease the weight of their yoke. These servitudes are performed at stated periods. Nine cannons are discharged as a signal, the day preceding their labour. Next morning at break of day, the nobility conduct the people to the king's palace, where they begin with dancing and music, which last for a quarter of an hour. One part of this troop is armed for war, and the other with instruments of labour, the scythe, the hook, and the spade. While the people are dancing before the gates of the palace, the nobles receive their instructions from the king, by his gentleman of the bed-chamber,

*Servitudes  
due to the  
king.*



chamber, upon which this body disperses itself to the different employments assigned. All the while they are at work the music plays, and they keep time by the strokes of the spade, the sweeps of the scythe or hook: their industry is increased by the music. Their labour has all the air of amusement; and while they are groaning under the chains of servitude, they seem the happiest people on earth. In a word, the king would be a powerful monarch, from the greatness of his revenue, the number of his subjects, and the despotism of his government, if he were not a bubble to the politics of his neighbours, and the intrigues of his priests. Besides the immense sums expended in continual war with the Popos, in the conquest of Offra, in the expences of his court, and in superstition, he maintains a standing force of four thousand men. Although he regards his subjects as his slaves, yet when they work for him he is forced to pay them liberally.

*Military  
force of  
Whidah.*

While Bosman presided over the Dutch commerce in Whidah, the king treated the Hollanders with more respect than any other nation; he made them larger presents, conferred extraordinary privileges on them, and supplied them with greater store of the best provisions than he had ever before granted to foreigners. But this favourable disposition was altered, as soon as the conduct of their trade was committed to the captains of ships, who paid little regard to the manners of a people so refined and polished, putting them on a footing with the other Negroes of the coast.

Des Marchais says, that notwithstanding the person and education of the king were so totally neglected before he ascended the throne, yet no sooner was he crowned, than the people, forgetting that he was a man, worshipped him as a god, and never approached him but with a respect mingled with fear and awe. Such as pay him their compliments in the morning, throw themselves on the ground, kiss the earth thrice, and, clapping their hands, pronounce with profound devotion, certain words of adoration. The nobles of the first rank are sometimes permitted to eat in his presence, but never with him. This honour is reserved for his women. In all probability the origin of the king's never eating in public was from policy, as if he would persuade his subjects that he lived without nourishment; a notion which must certainly confirm their belief of his di-

*The great  
veneration  
of the Whi-  
danese for  
their king.*

vinity : however, he makes no scruple of drinking before all the world.

It is never known in what part of the palace the king sleeps, and if that question is asked of the captain of his guards, or any of those nearest his person, their constant answer is, "Do you imagine that the deity sleeps?" He lives in the most slothful, luxurious, and debauched effeminacy among his women, without ever seeking or enjoying the conversation of men, or those exercises that could strengthen his mind, and give vigour to his body.

*Description  
of the king.*

To conclude this article, Bosman observes, that the reigning prince in his time was about fifty years of age, of a middle stature, ordinary countenance, but with eyes full of fire and spirit. This is probably the same prince which later authors speak of as an elderly person, brisk and lively for his years. "He was," says Bosman, "the most civil and obliging Negro I ever beheld; but the selfish councils of some of his flatterers altered his disposition, and made him severe, jealous, and harsh in his commerce with the Dutch. At first he took whatever they gave him; in the end he became more nice in his choice; and out of ship-loads of merchandize, it was difficult to please him. Thus the merchants," says our author, "lost by their traffick with the king; for after he had the best of their goods, it was no easy matter to dispose of the rest separately<sup>b</sup>."

*An account  
of the  
princes of  
Whidah.*

It would be hard to discover the exact number of the king's children by such a number of women: Bosman saw but four; three sons and one daughter; all of them handsome, but in particular the eldest. He was the most beautiful Negro he had ever seen; but the qualities of his mind did by no means correspond with those of his person; for he was proud, obstinate, and mischievous, in so much that all men wished he might not succeed to the crown (O). He kept in every quarter of the town certain agents, employed to plunder and steal from the natives and Europeans, out of which he received a proportion agreed on; even the king's goods did not escape his rapacious hands. He never stirred abroad but at night; and Bosman was honoured with several visits from him at the

<sup>b</sup> Epist. 20.

(O) We are at a loss in what manner to reconcile this with Des Marchais's account, of the education of the presumptive heir. Bosman saw him at court; but it might possibly be a younger son, mistaken by the people for the eldest.

most

most unseasonable hours. It was his pride that kept him shut up in the day, because he would not expose himself to the people, nor appear before his father. The second son greatly resembled the king, in the sweetness and openness of his disposition, all the nobility were assiduous in paying him their respects, charmed with the freedom of his manners. From the difference of their tempers, Bosman thought it probable that the king's death would be followed by a civil war. A majority of voices could not fail of being on the side of the younger; but the eldest was supported by right, and by the forces of the kingdom, as well as those bands of miscreants he employed for the meanest purposes. All the Europeans he doubted not would join the younger brother's party; and this conjecture was verified by facts. The French, Dutch, and Portuguese, all united to support the cause of the present king against his brother, and were the chief instruments of seating him in his father's throne. If we may credit Atkins, he soon laid aside that sweetness of manners which Bosman describes. After he came to the crown, he grew morose, retired, and lascivious in his temper, gross and unwieldy in his person; he never went out of the palace, but passed his time in luxury and lust, with no other company than that of his women. Atkins alleges, that not having made the people the usual present on receiving the crown, this avarice induced him to conceal himself, in order to save that expence. Others again say, that having never been invested with the sword of state, he could not depend on the allegiance of his subjects, and hence arose the motives for his retired life <sup>1</sup>.

*Civil war  
in Whidah.*

In Whidah, the rainy season commences about the middle of the month of May, and ends in the beginning of August. This is a dangerous and unhealthy time of the year, fruitful in abundance of diseases, both among the natives and foreigners. The rain falls not in showers, but in torrents and deluges; and so warm, that one would imagine it had been heated on a fire. In narrow passages, you are struck with a stream of hot air, enough to cause suffocation; and nothing but perpetual fanning with certain instruments they contrive for that purpose, can render life supportable.

*Climate of  
Whidah.*

As to the soil of Whidah, it consists in general of a rich red mould, very fertile, as may be imagined, from the number of crops it produces in a year; however, trees are

*Soil and  
produce.*

<sup>1</sup> Atkins.



extremely scarce on the sea-coast, till you pass the Euphrates, and those, such as bear little or no fruit. Their barrenness prevents not the natives from deifying them. At a small distance however from the sea, all kind of fruit-trees are found in abundance. Here are citrons, lemons, oranges, tamarinds, guavas and bananas. The palm and pardon trees are in the greatest plenty; the former is valued for the oil drawn from its fruit; the latter is but in little esteem on any other account than its wood, which is hard, lasting, and capable of receiving a fine polish. They make wine from it; but this liquor is in less esteem than their beer. European figs grow well here; and Bosman affirms, that the soil and climate are capable of producing every species of fruit, root, and pulle. He made the experiment on cabbages, carrots, turnips, radishes, parsley, and pease, and succeeded to his wish. Indigo thrives in this country; and our author believes the sugar-cane might be cultivated to the greatest advantage. They have also a species of the cotton tree, which they call polon, peculiar to Whidah. It produces a sort of fine down, short, but beautiful, and if rightly prepared, capable of making fine stuffs and cloths. An English factor had a piece died scarlet in the grain, that was greatly admired by all the Europeans for its strength, fineness, and incomparable colour, which exceeded any thing that they had ever seen in Europe. This kind of cotton might be usefully manufactured into hats, which would be at the same time handsome, light, and warm. Des Marchais extolls a small kind of fruit, which, according to him, has no name. He says it resembles the pip or seed of a pear; and if chewed without swallowing communicates a pleasant and sweet taste to the sharpest acids and bitters. Hence it would seem to be the kola, of which Bosman speaks in his account of the Gold Coast. Potatoes the natives commonly use for bread, of which they have prodigious quantities. They have yams likewise, but neither in such plenty, or of so good a kind as on other parts of the western coast. Several sorts of small beans are produced in great abundance; of these, one kind is called acraes, of which they make oil cakes, a pleasant and wholesome food, to those who are accustomed to it. Whidah also produces onions and ginger; but the first especially is scarce. Des Marchais gives us a particular, but indistinct account of a species of pea, that grows upon a shrub about twenty inches in height, greatly resembling the red pepper shrub. This shrub bears

*A beautiful  
kind of cot-  
ton that  
grows here.*

no flower, and the pease are inclosed in a pod, as tough as parchment. The pod grows at the bottom of twigs, which sprout out from the roots, whence the plant draws its nourishment. This pod or sack commonly contains from one hundred and twenty to one hundred and fifty pease, tender, easily digested, and of a flavour and taste equal to European pease.

Whidah produces three sorts of grain. The first in rank and esteem is the milhio, or *small maize*, the cultivation of which forms the chief object of the husbandman. It is sown twice every year; but the increase is much greater at one season than at another. The earth in the plentiful seasons is sown so thick with it, that scarce a foot-path is left untilld in the whole country. Notwithstanding the immense quantities produced, yet it scarce holds out from one season to another; so populous is the country. Another reason is, that a great part of it is smuggled to Popo, notwithstanding the severe laws prohibiting its exportation. Hence it is, that one barren year occasions an almost incredible famine in Whidah; freemen have often sold themselves for food; others have discharged their slaves, and given them freedom and hunger, because they were unable to maintain them. An English ship, in Bosman's time, purchased her cargo of slaves for provisions, with which she happened to be well stocked.

*Grain  
sown twice  
every year  
at Whidah.*

Their next sort of grain is the great milhio, good in its kind, but not used by the natives for bread. This great maize is entirely applied to brewing; of it they make beer; and no more is sown than they think necessary for that purpose. The third sort of milhio, grows not upon stalks, but in ears, like barley. Its grain is of a redish colour; and what is remarkable, it takes eight or nine months to ripen. This grain is not used for bread, but mixed with the great milhio in brewing; by which they imagine the beer is improved and strengthened. All the women are well skilled in the art of brewing; and one particular sort of the Whidan beer is equal to any we meet with in Europe. The common beer is sold for three-pence a bottle; but for the same quantity of the best you must pay a rixdollar. Even the slaves here drink nothing but beer. Their water, which they draw from wells, is esteemed unhealthy on account of its extreme coldness. It has often indeed been found to produce fevers, especially the free use of it in hot weather.

As to the animals of Whidah, it is too populous, and well cultivated, to afford a retreat for wild beasts. Elephants, buffaloes, and tygers, are found in the mountains, which divide this from the interior country. Some deer and hares are seen in Whidah, but in no great numbers; and they probably descend from the high countries, without making this their constant residence. Des Marchais says, that their venison is greatly inferior to what he has eat in Europe; but, says he, they are fully recompensed by the goodness and abundance of their apes, which are the fattest and most beautiful in the world. No flesh is more esteemed at Whidah than apes flesh; it sells at a higher price than mutton, and is always preferred to it. Even the European sailors soon overcome their prejudices, and eat it with a peculiar goût. The oxen, cows, sheep, goats, hogs, and all tame quadrupeds, differ in nothing from those of the other coasts. They are in general fatter, on account of the fine meadows and rich pasture, in which they live the whole year. Their horses are but indifferent, slight in the make, easily fatigued, and of a bad carriage, probably owing to their little skill in breaking them.

The whole country is covered with game of various sorts. Their tame fowl, as geese, ducks, hens and turkeys, are reasonable and good. Turtle-doves are so numerous, that a good marksman may shoot above a hundred in a day. Besides these, they have an infinite number of birds, valuable only for their beauty: among these is the crown bird, which is here less elegant than on the Gold Coast. The kingdom of Whidah is every where stocked with such variety of those charming feathered animals, that many of them have yet obtained no proper names; and are distinguished only by their colour, size, or some such characteristic. Birds of prey however are scarce.

*Cause of  
the revolution  
in  
Whidah.*

We shall conclude this account of the kingdom of Whidah, with a short relation of their wars with the powerful and politic king of Dahomay, that terminated in their ruin, and the subversion of their liberty. This relation we shall chiefly extract from Snelgrave, who was an eye-witness of most of the transactions, and upon the spot at the time the revolution was brought about\*. The wealth

\* Snelgrave, p. 21, & seq. etiam Prevost, *Hist. Generale des Voy.* tom. iv. liv. 8.



of this nation, arising from the fertility of the soil, and the flourishing state of its commerce, was attended with the usual effects of great riches. Effeminacy and luxury had crept among the once industrious and active inhabitants. Hence the king of Dahomay was invited to the conquest of a nation, no less easy than valuable in the acquisition. The king of Whidah, who had mounted the throne at the age of fourteen years, left the government entirely in the hands of the nobility, and abandoned himself to his women, to pleasure, and indolence. The nobility, in order to possess a more unlimited and secure authority, encouraged him in his natural disposition, and flattered all the passions of the young prince, with a truly European refinement and policy. He was thirty years of age at the time this revolution happened, anno 1727. But so far was he from meddling in public affairs, that he indulged every appetite with the same freedom he had enjoyed in his more boyish years. At his court he kept some thousands of women, and never permitted himself hardly to be approached by his own sex.

In this situation were things at Whidah, when the king of Dahomay, an inland prince, sent ambassadors to the king, desiring permission that his subjects might trade to the sea-coasts, with an offer of paying a yearly tribute of a certain number of slaves, or at least a certain duty upon every slave, to be disposed of, either to the European shipping, or to the natives of the coast. His request was denied, with a haughtiness which provoked that bold and resolute prince to vow revenge. These menaces were however disregarded by the king of Whidah.

Truro Audati, prince of Dahomay, was a brave and politic monarch, who, in the space of a few years, had extended his conquests towards the sea as far as Ardrah, an interior country, but the next in position to Whidah. He now proposed to sit down in peace, to enjoy and secure his conquests, had not the above accident rekindled his ambition, and forced him to take arms. To this was superadded another circumstance that hastened the fatal catastrophe of Whidah. The king of Ardrah had a brother called Hassar, a prince of great hopes, whom he treated with great rigour and severity. This the young prince could not longer endure with patience; and, finding himself unable to make a sufficient party in the kingdom to shake off the yoke, he had recourse to Truro Audati; promising him a large sum of money, if he would revenge the insults, indignities, and gross injustice, under

*Wars with  
the king of  
Dahomay.*

*King of  
Dahomay  
conquers  
Ardrah.*

which he laboured. Nothing more was necessary to encourage that ambitious and wise prince, who entered as heartily into the young Hassar's cause, as if he had been actuated by motives of sympathy and compassion. His designs were not long a secret to the king of Ardrah; who, in order to ward against the impending stroke, had recourse for assistance to the king of Whidah; it being the common interest of both kingdoms to oppose the growing power of Truro Audati. The Whidanese, however, were too much addicted to their ease to attend to the danger that threatened their neighbour, and of consequence themselves. Audati was suffered to enter Ardrah with an army of fifty thousand men, to cut in pieces the forces that attempted to resist, and make prisoner the king; who, according to the savage custom of those nations, was instantly beheaded. There was at the court of Ardrah, at that time, one Mr. Bulfinch Lamb, an English factor, sent by the governor to expedite some accounts between the king and him. A large balance was due to the king; and he detained Lamb, as a pledge for the payment, treating him for the two years of his residence with great kindness and civility. He was now presented to the conqueror Audati, who expressed the utmost surprize and satisfaction at the sight of a white man, ordered him to be conducted to his court; and a house, domestics, and women, to be appointed him. After having kept him three years in this situation, he returned him to the factory, loaded with gold and rich presents. During his residence here he constantly dissuaded the king from his design of invading Whidah, which he represented as a populous and potent kingdom, accustomed to fire-arms, and strongly connected with the Europeans, who would not fail to exert themselves in their quarrel. After Lamb's departure, the politic Audati employed his spies in Whidah; and from them learned a true account of the divisions, the sloth and indolence that reigned; a piece of intelligence of which he took immediate advantage. He began his attack upon the most northern province of the kingdom. Here an appragbah, or Negro chief, ruled, in whom the government was hereditary. The appragbah immediately demanded succours from the king; but he had enemies at court, who wished his ruin, and rendered the king deaf to his remonstrances. Seeing himself abandoned, he took the resolution of submitting to Audati: and his voluntary homage procured him favourable and mild terms from the conqueror. After this, a free passage

age

age was open to the kingdom of Whidah, and even to Sabi, the capital; there being no other obstruction than a river, which ran on the north side of the city. The king of Dahomay encamped on the opposite banks, not doubting but the passage would be disputed: in this opinion, however, he was mistaken; the effeminate Whidaneſe placing their ſecurity in their numbers and gods, without thinking any farther precautions neceſſary. In the morning they met their prieſts on the banks of the river, and there ſacrificed to the grand ſerpent; after which ceremony they returned to the city, fully aſſured of the efficacy of what they had done to ſtop the progreſs of the enemy.

*He invades Whidah.*

The firſt ſtep taken by Audati was to ſend to the Europeans an aſſurance, that, if they remained neuter, they ſhould not only be treated with kindneſs, but their trade ſhould be freed from thoſe duties and reſtrictions at preſent laid upon it by the king of Whidah: if, on the contrary, they joined his enemy, and took up arms againſt him, they muſt expect all the horrors of war, and the moſt cruel effects of his reſentment. This declaration threw the Europeans into the utmoſt perplexity and conſternation. Some propoſed retiring to their forts on the ſea-coaſt, ſome miles diſtant from Sabi, and there wait the event. Others again apprehended that this retreat would irritate the king of Whidah, as ſetting a bad precedent to his ſubjects: theſe were therefore inclined to ſtay in the capital, and this propoſal was determined on.

Truro Audati, perceiving that the defence of the river was committed to the fetiches, or ſnakes, detached two hundred men, to ſound the fords. This body gaining the oppoſite ſhore without any reſiſtance, marched immediately towards the capital, attended with a great number of warlike inſtruments. The king of Whidah, hearing of their approach, fled precipitately out of the palace, and retired, with all his women and court, to a maritime iſland diſjoined by the river from the continent (P). The reſt of the inhabitants, having no canoes to tranſport them, were drowned in thouſands, attempting to ſwim

*The ſuperſtitious conduct of the Whidaneſe.*

(P) This iſland, which the king pitched upon for his aſylum, is upon the borders of the kingdom of Popo, which joins the kingdom of Whidah on the weſt. On the north, north-eaſt, and north-weſt, it is ſurrounded by a river (1).

(1) Vide Smith, p. 91.



across. Others, amounting to one half of the people, took shelter in the woods and thickets; where, endeavouring to avoid the sword, they perished by famine. The detachment of Dahomans, that had entered the city, meeting with no resistance, set fire to the palace, and sent word to the king, that nothing hindered his approaching the capital. Upon this intimation, the whole army began their march, and, crossing the river, were soon convinced by ocular demonstration, that a whole nation had deserted their liberty and property, their wives, children, and gods, without one attempt to resist the enemy. To the latter the Dahomans by no means paid the regard and veneration with which they were worshipped by the Whidaneſe: for, finding them tame and numerous, every house being filled with snakes, they took them up by the middle, and jeeringly desired them, if they were gods, to speak, and defend themselves. As the snakes made no reply, they cut off their heads, gutted, and broiled them upon charcoal; saying, "They had never before dined upon divinities; but, as these gods had often feasted upon human sacrifices, it was but reasonable they should treat in their turn."

*The king of Whidah retreats to a desert island.*

In the beginning of the year 1729, Snelgrave found the unhappy king of Whidah in that miserable island, where, on the approach of the enemy, he had taken shelter. There he led a deplorable and destitute life, in a poor village, barren, sandy, and void of every necessary of life. Snelgrave, taking pity on his sad reverse of fortune, waited upon him, with such presents as he thought would be most acceptable, which the fugitive king received with great satisfaction, expressing his gratitude by a present of a goat, the only effects of value of which he was possessed. He was attended only by one of his cabocoers, the most faithful of all his subjects, who never deserted him in his misfortunes, and preferred his honour, gratitude, and loyalty, to all the advantages he could receive from subjecting himself to the conqueror, and forsaking his native prince: a rare example of fidelity and attachment in a courtier. All besides had paid the submission to the victorious king of Dahomay, and received the yoke without murmur.

*An attempt to restore the king.*

After having possessed himself of the capital, and received the obedience of the chief men of Whidah, Audati returned to the more complete conquest of Ardrah, and to prosecute a war he had been engaged in with the king of Yos, the ally of Ardrah. Some losses he had here sustained, and the busy disposition of an European factor at

Jachen

Jachen nearly occasioned a revolution in Whidah, and restored the lawful prince to the throne. When governor Wilton, in July 1729, had quitted Whidah, he left the management of the English affairs in the hands of one Testefole, a foreigner, but of what nation is uncertain. This man had resided a great number of years in Guinea, supplying by experience what he fell short of in judgment, moderation, and prudence. Although he had made frequent visits to the king of Dahomay, and was always received with affability and particular distinction, yet the notion he entertained of his weakness after his late losses, and from too extended conquests, made him project the scheme which had nearly terminated in his ruin and that of the English establishment in Whidah. He communicated to the king of Popo his design of restoring the deposed king, and was confirmed by him in his intention. Since the late revolution, the channel of commerce between the kingdoms of Whidah and Popo had been wholly blocked up; nothing therefore could be more agreeable to the king of Popo than a project that promised the restoration of the king of Whidah, and the usual commerce between the nations. He not only encouraged Testefole to prosecute his plan, but promised him powerful assistance in executing it. Accordingly they raised an army of five thousand men, under the command of the deposed king, and his faithful cabocoer Ossu. The king of Dahomay was at this time busied in repairing his cities, and settling the conquered country of Ardrah: it was a long time before he was apprised of the revolt, the news of which he received with the utmost astonishment; wondering that a prince so negligent in defending his rights, should attempt by force of arms to regain them. He was now in no condition to undertake a fresh war; he had buried a great number of his men while encamped in the marshes of Yos: he had lost a great number of his troops in a battle fought with that prince; and now he had detached the greater part of the remaining forces to the different sea-coasts, to dispose of the prisoners he had made in the war. However, he fell upon a stratagem to deliver himself out of this extremity, no less happy in the contrivance than successful in the event. Assembling a great number of women, he had them clothed and armed as men. He formed them into companies, giving to each their proper officers, colours, and music. This female army he put in motion against the enemy, the first line of every company being composed of men, the better to deceive, and likewise, if necessary,

*The politic  
conduct of  
the king of  
Dahomay.*

necessary, to sustain the first shock of the Whidanese. Intelligence of this march was soon carried to the Whidan camp, where they raised a consternation proportioned to the suddenness of the event, the deceit put upon the troops by Testefole, and the natural timidity and effeminacy of the soldiers. All of them abandoned their colours, their king, and their fidelity: nor could all the endeavours of that unfortunate prince bring them back to their duty. In this extremity he was forced a second time to retire to his barren and desolate island, and Testefole took sanctuary in the English fort, whither he was pursued to the trenches by the Dahoman women, and a considerable number of his men cut off. He was soon after made prisoner in the French fort, carried, bound hand and foot, to the king, punished with the most cruel tortures, and, lastly, put to death: a punishment which his rash and impetuous, as well as disrespectful conduct to the king of Dahomay richly merited (Q). In this manner does the once famous kingdom of Whidah remain to this day; a province dependent on the king of Dahomay, governed by a viceroy; but the people live in the full and free use of their ancient religion, laws, and government.

Before we enter upon our account of the kingdom of Ardrah, we shall conclude this section with a few particulars relating to the king of Dahomay (R). When his army entered Sabi, they were shocked at the sight of some Europeans, who remained there, not daring to approach them,

(Q) While the Dahoman army surrounded the fort at Jachen, several overtures for a peace were made by the king, all of which Testefole rejected, with an insolence little becoming a conqueror, much less a petty factor, blocked up in his fort by a potent monarch. One day, the Dahoman ambassador being with him, in order to bring to reason that imprudent man, some words arose, upon which Testefole struck the ambassador; saying at the same time, that were his king in his power he would use him after a different manner. This affair being told to the king of Dahomay, he re-

plied, with more than usual composure, "This man must certainly have some very extraordinary reason for his enmity to me. Is it that he is unable to repay the many favours and civilities I have conferred on him?" An answer that ought to be written in golden characters.

(R) Snelgrave, we believe, is the only writer who gives any account of this prince; we shall therefore relate from him all that is known concerning a monarch so powerful. The situation of his kingdom is entirely unknown, it lying far up the country, north of Ardrah.

their



their complexion and dress being so different from any thing they had ever beheld<sup>1</sup>.

They could not be persuaded they were men, till they heard them speak, and were assured by the Whidanese, that these were the merchants who purchased all the slaves that were sold in Guinea. As soon as their understandings were informed, and their prejudices removed, their respect ceased. They seized upon Duport the French factor, robbed him of his watch and money, conveying him and some other white men, English, French, Dutch, and Portuguese, prisoners to the camp. Of this number was Jeremy Tiiker, who a few days before had resigned the government of affairs to Duport, with intention of sailing for England. The Sieur Pereira made his escape out of Sabi; and arrived at the French factory of Jachen.

*Short sketch of the politics, strength, and manners of the Dahomans.*

Next day they arrived in the camp four miles distant from Sabi, where they were separated according to their different nations, and ill treated for some days. At length they were brought into the king's presence, who graciously removed their fears concerning the consequences of the war; promising, they should have no reason to be sorry for the revolution in the kingdom of Whidah. He afterwards set them at liberty, without ransom, permitting them to return to their several forts. He presented the English and French governors with some slaves; assuring them, that his intention was, the moment he had established his conquests, to cultivate trade, to render commerce flourishing, and to give the Europeans peculiar testimonies of his friendship and regard.

Snelgrave, having passed a few days with the French and English on the banks of the river, proceeded to Jachen, a town situated about seven leagues eastward of Sabi, where the English and French have factories. It has a district stretching about three miles along the coast, a good road for shipping, and the only harbour by which Europeans have a communication with Ardrah. It is governed by an hereditary prince, paying a yearly tribute to the monarch of Ardrah. When the king of Dahomay became master of that country, the prince of Jachen paid him his submission, with an offer of the same tribute he had yearly paid to Ardrah; a step that was greatly approved by Truro Audati; in consequence of which he remitted part of the tribute. After ravaging, plundering, and destroying all

<sup>1</sup> The whole of this account, extracted from the Journal of Snelgrave, is printed in Prevost's Collection, tom. iv.

the other countries he had conquered, the politic Audati imagined he might render the natives of Jachen useful to his subjects, by instructing them in the mysteries of trade. He had now opened a path to the sea; but still, without knowledge in commerce, all the blood he had spilt would be of little use to the wealth and happiness of his people. Jachen had always been the rival of Whidah in trade; the latter being overturned, all the commerce which before had been in the hands of both, could now be engrossed by Jachen alone, or rather by the Dahomans, who would always preserve the right of conquest over the ports, and of course the greater share of the traffick. Such were the views of this wise prince, in depriving the one of their trade, while he encouraged and supported the other in all their privileges, and whatever could promote a spirit of industry and commerce.

The following extract from the journal of Snelgrave may not be unacceptable to the reader. "We were carried," says he, "to the camp in litters, placed on the shoulders of six negroes. Nothing could exceed in beauty the prospect the country afforded, if you did not on every side perceive the devastation and ravages of war. Not only the ruins of towns and villages were continually present to the eye, but heaps of bones, the remains of those unhappy victims of ambition and avarice. When we arrived within a quarter of a mile of the camp a messenger came to us, with compliments from the king; bidding us be of good courage, and pay his majesty the respect due to so great a prince. On our arrival in the camp, we were delivered into the custody of a superior officer, bearing the title of captain, and surrounded with guards, armed with guns, naked swords, and targets. They made such a number of ridiculous grimaces, that it was scarce possible to avoid laughing. Their actions growing still more absurd and obscure, when the captain, attended by two other officers, came up to us, with their swords drawn, the points of which they applied to their naked breasts, skipping, leaping, and shaking their heads, for some time. This ceremony ended, they resumed a more composed air, congratulating us on our arrival, and poured out a cup of palm-wine, to the king's health: after which ceremony, we were conducted to our tents, under an escort of five hundred men, preceded by a band of music.

"The camp was pitched near Assen, which had been the capital of Ardrah, but now a large pile of rubbish and ruins. The victorious army was lodged in tents, composed

posed of the branches of trees, covered with straw, of the form of a bee-hive, but large enough to contain ten or a dozen soldiers. After the captain had left the Europeans in their tent, with a guard placed at a small distance, he went directly to the king, to give an account of his commission. Next day a large tent, surrounded by pallisadoes, was erected in the middle of the camp: thither the Europeans were conducted; and to prevent the crowd from incommoding them, a proclamation was published, prohibiting them, under pain of death, from assembling round the pallisadoes. This regard for their safety and ease gave the Europeans great joy. They dined in the large tent, exposed to the view of the whole camp; but now, being secure of their lives, they sustained no other inconvenience than what arose from the myriads of flies that swarmed round them. After dinner the captain returned, to conduct the Europeans to the king. In their way they saw a scaffold, covered with human heads; and, upon enquiry, they were informed by their interpreter, that those heads were all that remained of four thousand prisoners the Dahomans had sacrificed in the space of three weeks. Those unhappy persons were chiefly Whidanese; among whom were several of the nobility, who had basely deserted their king, and reaped this reward of their treachery and pusillanimity. The Europeans were conducted through a large porch into a wide square, where they were made to sit down upon turf-seats, and presented by the captain with a cow, a goat, and a sheep; to which he added a compliment, that his majesty was sorry it should be out of his power, amidst the din and tumult of arms, to treat them in a manner consistent with his affection and esteem. Upon this occasion they had not the honour of being presented to his majesty: they were permitted, however, to gratify their curiosity in regard to every particular about the court. As they went out at the porch, in order to return to their tents, they were met by four handsome, lusty, negroes, armed each with a fusée upon his shoulder, a naked sword in his hand, and his neck adorned with collars of human teeth. They were told by their interpreter, that these were heroes of the Dahoman nation, who were permitted to deck themselves with the teeth of the enemies they had slain in battle. Snelgrave desired the interpreter to compliment them in the name of the Europeans, and to assure them, that they looked upon them as the bravest of men; to which they replied, with great politeness,



politencfs, that they only claimed the next rank to the white men, whom they greatly efteemed.

“Two days after, they received orders to prepare themfelves for an audience of the king; when they were conducted to the fame fquare they had feen before. Here they found his majefty feated on a throne, raifed high for the occafion, and fet off with the fpoils of the royal palace at Sabi. A fine filk canopy, fupported by four beautiful women, was held over his head, to defend him from the fcorching heat of the fun, while other females fanned him, and drove away the flies. The women were richly clothed from the girdle to the heels, the upper part of the body being entirely naked, after the fafhion of the country. On their arms they wore gold bracelets of great value, fet with jewels, necklaces of the fame metal, ftudded with precious ftones, and pretty little ornaments, peculiar to the country, interwoven with their hair. Thefe confifted chiefly of pebbles and cryftals, of various colours, ranged with great tafte, and in a manner that fet off their luftre to great advantage. A number of other foffils and gems they ufed, which were brought from the interior parts of Africa. Our author obferves, that moft of the diamonds he faw were fmall, but of a fine and delicate water, exceeding any imported from the kingdoms of Golconda and Vifnapore.

“As to the king, he was drefled in a robe of filk, flowered with gold, and fweeping the ground behind with a long train. On his head he wore an European hat, embroidered, and fandals on his feet. When the Europeans approached within twenty paces of him, he made a motion for them to halt, and bid them, by his interpreter, a hearty welcome to his dominions. After giving Snelgrave affurances of his protection, he ordered them to be feated; and, calling for fome wine, drank their healths, defiring that the cup might go round. While they were thus employed, eight hundred prifoners were brought into the camp, from a country called Tuffo, diftant fix days journey from Ardrah. This people, while the king of Dahomay was employed in the conqueft of Whidah, had attacked five hundred of his troops, fent to efcorde twelve of his women and fome treafure to Dahomay. The Tuffos, after routing the convoy, put the women to death, and feized on the treafure; an infult which Truro Audati haftened to revenge as foon as he was difengaged from the Whidan war. A ftrong detachment from his army was fent againft them; which  
meeting

meeting with the enemy, entirely defeated them, and made prisoners of the unfortunate persons now led into the court. The sight of those wretches going to be sacrificed could not fail to excite emotions of pity, though their crime was of such a nature as little merited compassion. A certain number of them was chosen by the king to be offered up as victims to the fetiches, and the manes of those women they had basely murdered; the rest were kept as slaves, for the use of the king and court, or sold to the Europeans. All the soldiers employed on this expedition were rewarded for their services, receiving from the hands of their officers cowris to the amount of twenty shillings for a male slave, and twelve for a female. The same soldiers brought likewise into the middle of the camp some thousand heads of those they had slain in battle; for each of which they were paid a certain sum of money."

All the time the king continued in the great square, the nobility lay prostrate on the ground, without presuming to approach nearer to him than twenty paces, or hardly to lift up their faces, unless they were spoken to. Those who had any thing to communicate to him first kissed the ground with profound reverence, and then whispered in the ear of an elderly lady, who stood on the right hand of his throne, whose business it was to convey the request, information, or whatever it was, to the king. This day his majesty made presents to his principal officers and women of above two hundred slaves, which royal bounty was proclaimed over the camp, and echoed by the joyful shouts and acclamations of the soldiery. The last ceremony which our author saw was the most extraordinary of the whole. Two Negroes came before his majesty, carrying a vessel filled with grain, the quantity amounting to at least six gallons. After setting it down on the ground they fell upon their knees, and then, without any apparent concern, began eating the grain in handfuls, so fast that the whole was consumed in a few minutes. Snelgrave was told by the interpreter, that the intention of this ceremony was purely to amuse the king, and that the poor wretches never long survived this inhuman diversion: however, that there never were wanting a number of candidates for the honour of succeeding them. Dinner was then served up; during which the prince of Jachen's brother entered the tent of the Europeans in the utmost fright and disorder. He had just met the unhappy Tussos going to be sacrificed; his ears and heart were penetrated with their piteous cries; nothing being so horrible and shocking

shocking to a native of the sea-coast as that monstrous practice of the interior nations, of sacrificing human victims, and feeding upon the flesh of their own species.

Some of the Europeans had the curiosity to go and see those sacrifices performed. The first who made his appearance was a Negro, of a majestic air, robust, and handsome, about fifty years of age. His hands were bound behind him, but in his face he bore no marks of fear or grief, and his whole deportment was that of a conqueror, rather than a slave going to be sacrificed. A Dahoman priest standing upon the scaffold pronounced over his head certain mysterious words, after which the victim was mounted up, and his head at one blow severed from his body, the whole assembly sending forth a loud shout. The head was thrown to a corner of the scaffold, the body suffered to lie till all the blood had run out; after which it was carried to the camp, and the head sent to court. The interpreter told Snelgrave, that the head was the property of the king, the blood was given to the fetiche, and the body always left to the soldiers. With the same formality was the sacrifice continued through the several victims; the men offering themselves with great constancy and courage; but the women, agreeable to the tenderness of the sex, breaking out into doleful lamentations that would melt the most callous heart. After the sacrifice a colonel of the guard came up to Snelgrave, and asked him what he thought of it? Snelgrave replied, that it was wonderful to him how so wise a prince as Truto Audati should sacrifice such a number of men, whom he might have sold to great advantage. The colonel answered, that it had been the custom of their nation for time immemorial; that after a certain great victory, the king could not dispense with a vow he had made before the battle, of offering up to God a certain number of prisoners: that the Dahoman kings ever since believed that the neglect of this ceremony would be attended with some dreadful calamity, either to them or to the nation; and to the exact performance of it they attribute the run of prosperity they have enjoyed for a series of years: that the reasons for chusing out old men for victims were purely political, they being of less value at market, and more dangerous, from their experience and cunning, than the young. He added, that as to the young men they sometimes sacrificed, it was with intention they should wait in the next world upon the king's women the Tussos had slain; from which superstition we may conclude the Dahomans



homans have some idea of a future state, and the immortality of the soul.

Snelgrave relates, that he was assured both by the prince of Jachen and by his interpreter, that the Dahoman priests broiled and ate the bodies of the victims, distributing the remainder to the soldiers, who had spent the whole night in gluttony and riot. However, he does not advance this assertion as certain truth, but on the report only of credible witnesses, who could have no view or design in deceiving him. This he thinks is more strongly confirmed by the attestation of an honest and plain writer, Robert Moor, surgeon to a frigate in the English service. John Dagge, the captain, on his arrival at Whidah, finding himself indisposed, sent Moor upon an embassy to the camp of the king of Dahomay, with presents to that monarch. Moor had the curiosity to go round the whole camp, when, in passing the market, he saw human flesh exposed to sale. Snelgrave, who had this account from Moor's own mouth, says, that his curiosity did not lead him to the market-place; but that if it had, he doubts not but he should have met with the same dreadful spectacle. Atkins, however, discredits this report, and affirms, that Moor mistook monkey's flesh for human. He blames Snelgrave for relating, upon the authority of others, things in which he might so easily have satisfied himself<sup>m</sup>.

Among the European prisoners the king of Dahomay had taken in the conquest of Ardrah, was a Portuguese mulattoe, whose affection and attachment he gained by his liberality and kindness. In particular he had presented him with a woman whose beauty Snelgrave greatly admired (S). She had the complexion of an European, and was really fair and delicate, but the features and hair of a Negro. The Portuguese was besides raised to some high offices about the court, and was the favourite and minion of the king. This man paid great regard to Snelgrave, visited him, and every day supplied him with the best provisions the country afforded. By him he was told of the war the Dahomans maintained against the king of Yos,

<sup>m</sup> Atkins, p. 39.

(S) This lady was born in gal on some mercantile affairs Europe, of mulattoe parents, (1). who had come over to Portu-

(1) Prevost, tom. v. p. 251.

after the conquest of Ardrah. This last country, he said, lay a great way north-east of Dahomay, on the opposite side of a vast lake, from which issued a number of rivers, some of which discharged themselves into the Gulf of Guinea. He said, that a number of fugitive princes, whose fathers had been put to death by the Dahoman monarch, had fled to the king of Yoſ, as their protector, and engaged him by their intreaties to declare war against Truro Audati. He was soon in a condition to take the field; and the king of Dahomay, quitting Ardrah, was not long in opposing him with all his forces, which consisted wholly of infantry. As the enemy's army was entirely composed of cavalry, Audati apprehended, that, in an open country, his troops would be surrounded, and every where broke by the vigour, weight, and impetuosity of the horse. To prevent this inconvenience, he ranged in different parts of his wings and center, platoons of musquetry, whose fire he knew would terrify the horse, unaccustomed to those explosions. This disposition had the effect; it prevented the two armies from coming to a general and unequal engagement. As they had continued, however, for four days to skirmish incessantly, the Dahoman army began to grow tired of standing constantly to arms, and watching the motions of an enemy, equally alert and intrepid; besides, the horse now began to stand fire, and were not, as at first, put into confusion upon every discharge of the musquetry. In this situation Audati found it necessary to have recourse to stratagem. He had in his camp a great quantity of brandy, aqua vitæ, and spirituous liquors, which he had brought from Ardrah. These, with some valuable effects, he ordered to be removed to a neighbouring village, under a strong guard, as if he intended to secure them from danger. He afterwards, by an advanced detachment, vigorously attacked the enemy, who received him with equal bravery. After a sharp action he retreated, on the approach of night, in seeming confusion, as if he had yielded to their superiority. The enemy, not doubting but they had obtained a complete victory, seized upon the magazine of spirits, which they drank with great avidity, and with just the effect which Audati desired and expected. He watched the proper opportunity by his spies, and returning with great diligence, he attacked them with vigour, while two-thirds of the army were drunk or asleep, and found it no difficult matter to conquer. Some, however, mounted their horses, and stood the charge with the utmost obstinacy; but these being

few

few in number, could not prevent a total defeat and prodigious slaughter. However, added the Portuguese, Truro Audati is so well assured of the bravery of the enemy, and the superiority they maintain by their cavalry in an open country, that he tries every means to gain their friendship. He has made rich presents to the king of Yos to keep him quiet, and dreads nothing so much as a second war with so intrepid a nation. Another invasion, continued he, may turn the scale of fortune, and reduce the Dahomans to the condition to which they have brought many other nations; for there is no depending upon stratagems, where every other advantage is on the side of the enemy. Should another war break out, and Audati be deserted by his good fortune, he has taken the resolution of retiring to the conquered provinces on the sea-coast; knowing that the superstition of his enemies will prevent their pursuing him. The great fetiche of the people of Yos is the sea; but so profound is their veneration, that their priests prohibit them from approaching or seeing it. The breach of this part of their faith, they are fully persuaded, would be attended with the most terrible national calamities.

Some days after Snelgrave's arrival in the camp, he was invited to a second audience of the monarch. On entering the court, he was desired to stop till the king had examined the quality of the presents which he understood Snelgrave proposed making. He was afterwards introduced into a little court, at the farther end of which the king was seated, cross-legged, upon a fine silk carpet. The appearance of his attendants was brilliant; but few women were in waiting. On seeing Snelgrave and the other Europeans, he very affably enquired after their health, how they liked their accommodations and manner of living, ordering some fine mats to be placed near him for them to sit on. He then interrogated Snelgrave concerning the nature of the commerce he carried on with the maritime kingdoms of Africa. The captain replied, that slaves were the chief branch of traffick, but that he likewise purchased gold and ivory, in exchange for which he gave European commodities: concluding with his humble request, that his majesty would be pleased to countenance and protect a trade equally advantageous to Europe and to Africa; a request which he was assured would be granted as soon as the rights of each nation could be ascertained, and general commercial laws established. The king then desired Snelgrave to address himself to

*Description  
of the king  
of Dahomay.*



Zuinglar, an officer of distinction, whom he had known at Whidah. The zuinglar, by order of his master, declared to Snelgrave, that, notwithstanding the rights of conquest, it was his majesty's resolution not to raise the duties and imposts upon trade, and to continue them on the footing they had formerly stood upon at Whidah. The English captain replied, that his majesty being infinitely a greater prince than the king of Whidah, it was hoped he would lessen the restrictions upon trade, and content himself with a smaller duty. This objection puzzled the zuinglar, and made him hesitate about the answer he ought to return; but the king, who obliged the interpreter to explain every particle that was uttered, replied, that the natural consequence of his being a greater prince, was a more profound respect and higher imposts: "However (says he; resuming a more mild and gracious manner) as you are the first English captain I have seen, I will treat you as one would a young wife, to whom he can deny nothing." Snelgrave was struck with the lively politeness of this answer; and imagining the interpreter had given a different turn to the king's expression, he accused him of deceiving him; but his majesty resuming the discourse in the same terms, soon convinced Snelgrave, that true complaisance is not confined to Europe. The whole of his compliment was perfectly calculated to render the stranger happy; and he concluded it with a promise, that his conduct should by no means discredit his professions. Encouraged by this extreme condescension, Snelgrave took the liberty of representing, that the only sure method to render commerce flourishing, was to lay as few clogs and restrictions upon in as possible; and to protect the English not only against the petty frauds of the common Negroes, but the exorbitant exactions of the chief officers of the court and customs. He added, that from neglecting those two important points, the king of Whidah had greatly injured the trade of his country. His majesty replied, that he was entirely of his sentiments, and desired to know what the English believed they should be able to pay. Snelgrave answered, that to give vigour to their traffick, and inspire them with zeal and gratitude to his majesty, a moiety of what was exacted by the king of Whidah would be sufficient, and as much as they well could bear. Immediately the terms were accepted, and the king, to conclude the audience with the same amiable dignity with which he had begun it, assured Snelgrave, that he would thoroughly restrain the exactions and frauds  
he

he complained of, punish with the utmost rigour all impositions and injuries done to the Europeans, and the English in particular, and be himself the supporter and protector of commerce, which he hoped to see flourish in every corner of his dominions.

This treaty of commerce being finished, the affection and regard of the Dahoman monarch for the Europeans was so conspicuous, that Snelgrave did not hesitate to implore his clemency in behalf of the unhappy people of Whidah. In acknowledging that the common people were fraudulent, he excused them by the example of their superiors, who always shared in their acquisitions and thefts from strangers and foreigners. He scrupled not to assert, that if it should please his majesty to shew mercy in restoring them to their country, and imposing a tribute on them, they would become useful to his interest, and highly serviceable to the state by their industry, their skill in husbandry, acquaintance with the Europeans, and knowledge in commerce. He added, that it was a maxim among European princes, to estimate the strength of a kingdom by the number of its inhabitants; and that if his majesty would adopt this principle, he might easily add a hundred thousand useful subjects to the number of his people. His majesty's reply was, that he was fully assured of the truth of all the English captain had advanced, but that the tranquillity of Whidah could never be established while the king was living; he had therefore, he said, offered to restore the people to their former possessions, provided they would put the king into his hands, either dead or alive.

This conversation was followed by a variety of other discourse, through every part of which the king displayed the qualities of a noble and generous mind, as well as of an able politician, considering the barbarous ignorance in which he had ever been bred. Among other subjects that occurred, he complained to Snelgrave of the ingratitude of Mr. Lamb, the English factor; who after receiving above three hundred ounces of gold from him, eight slaves, and in particular Tom, a favourite slave of Jachen, under promise of returning within a certain time limited, had broke his faith, made light of the friendship of a great monarch, and infringed the rights of hospitality, by a flagrant breach of his word. His villainy, however, did not, he said, prejudice him against the nation; there were bad men in all countries; but it would be his endeavour not to furnish the English with an opportunity either of retorting or repeating the crime. The best apology Snel-

grave could make for his countryman, was by disclaiming all acquaintance with him. He told the king, that the English merchant had, besides the ship he commanded, five others that traded to Whidah and Jachen; he hoped therefore that his majesty would shew the same favour to the others he was pleased to confer on him; the king replied, that notwithstanding he meant to restrain some of his favours to him in particular, yet the other captains should have no cause of complaint. Then began a bargain about slaves, at the conclusion of which, his majesty ordered the prince royal of Jachen to be called in: to him he declared, with orders to communicate his will to his brother, that whoever was detected in defrauding, robbing, injuring, or exacting exorbitant presents from any Englishman within the kingdom of Whidah or Jachen, should be impaled alive on the shore, in terrorem, by the severity of the example to deter others from violating the sacred rights of hospitality. It being now late, Snelgrave and his companions took their leave, after having returned his majesty thanks for the high honour he had done them; and the numberless favours conferred upon the Europeans in general.

As this audience lasted above five hours, he had full leisure and opportunity of making all the observations he could desire on his majesty's person and understanding. As to the former, it was of a middling stature, robust, and exactly proportioned. His face was marked with the small pox, but not disfigured. His eyes were piercing and black, full of fire and spirit, or of a gentleness and softness, just as the subject of discourse happened to turn. Snelgrave affirms, that every feature bespoke the greatness of his mind, and his whole deportment was that of a king. He was affable without being familiar, and possessed the happy art of descending to the level of his company, without laying aside majesty; although you were invited to speak with freedom, yet it was not possible to lay aside respect; and you beheld in the same person, the social companion and the mighty prince, the ease of the friend blended with the dignity of the monarch. In short, take him all in all, Truro Audati was a most extraordinary person, who possessed the most amiable virtues and striking qualities, without one vice, but what he owed to the prejudice of education, and the barbarous manners of his country.

Before Snelgrave quitted the Dahoman court, he had occasion to see a review of the troops before the royal tent. Three thousand of them were armed with musquets,  
swords,



swords, and targets, which they exercised to admiration, having gone through all the evolutions, and fired twenty rounds in the space of two hours. All the rest of the troops were armed in the manner common to Negroes. As they passed the king, they prostrated themselves to the ground, kissed the earth, and rose up with a sprightliness and activity that was astonishing. What most surprised our author, was about ten thousand boys that followed the camp. These he was told were young soldiers, bred up to all the hardships of war. They were taught the exercise, put at a certain age upon dangerous exploits, by way of probation, before they were admitted to the honour of serving their king, and supported at the public expence. "After this (says Snelgrave) I could not wonder how Truro Audati came to be so powerful a prince, and a mighty conqueror."

This abstract from the voyage of Snelgrave we thought a necessary appendix to the history of Whidah. No author has described the manners of the potent kingdom of Dahomay; and this occasion of relating all we knew concerning the conqueror of Whidah, and a prince of so glorious a character, we imagined would be no ungrateful present to our readers.

*Conclusion  
of the ab-  
stract from  
Snelgrave.*

## S E C T. VI.

### *Kingdom of Ardrah.*

**WE** come now to the kingdom of Ardrah, or the fourth division of that part of the kingdom of Benin called the Slave Coast. Europeans have not frequented it enough exactly to ascertain its geography or dimensions. We know, however, from undoubted authority and the concurrence of writers, that it extends a great way to the northern and interior country, that it is filled with populous towns and villages, that the kingdom in general is fertile and well cultivated, and the people warlike, although they were subdued by a nation more powerful than themselves. The truth is, Europeans are only acquainted with a few towns near the coast, and from these form their judgment of the rest. It is bounded, we are told, on the west by the Rio Volta, on the east by the kingdom

y See the Abbé Prevost's *Collect. des Voyages au long des Cotes Occident. de l'Afrique*, tom. v.

*Description  
of Ardrah.*

*This king-  
dom di-  
vided into  
Great and  
Little Ar-  
drah.*

of Benin Proper (these, including the kingdom of Whidah, taking in a tract of a hundred leagues), on the south by the ocean, and on the north north-west, by the kingdoms of Oyeo and Alghemi, or Ulcain. Towards the south or sea coast, Ardrah is extremely confined, widening as it extends northward into the form of a triangle. However, this is purely the conjecture of voyagers, and founded upon the lame and imperfect account of the natives, who are amazingly ignorant of the chorography of their own country, and indeed of every thing removed a few miles from their own houses. The coast, beginning four leagues east of Great Popo, and ending at Acqui, comprehends the space of twenty-five leagues, if we include the province of Jachen, which has a prince of its own, tributary to the king of Ardrah. Bosman and Barbot divide it into Great and Little Ardrah. Under the latter, they comprehend all the maritime coast, the interior country making the former. Little Ardrah ascends up the country as far as Ofsra, and Great Ardrah takes in the petty state of Torri (R). The coast from Whidah to little Ardrah, is low and flat, but rises by a gentle ascent as you proceed to Jachen<sup>a</sup>. This latter town is a league north-north-east distant from Praya or Little Ardrah, and is governed by a prince or phidalgo, who resides here in a sumptuous manner, lodged in a palace wonderfully splendid for the country, and his confined dominions. Jachen, so called from the first Dutch factor, who resided there, is fifteen hundred fathoms in

<sup>a</sup> Bosman, p. 243. Barbot, p. 327, & 346, etiam Le Croix, tom. iii. p. 150.

(R) Torri has Foulaon for its capital, a town seated on the river Jachen, running east and west to Great Popo. The territory of Torri is four leagues in circumference, having Whidah on the west, Ofsra on the east, and the sea on the south. The state is independent, paying only a small acknowledgement for the protection of the king of Ardrah; the people industrious, but, like their neighbours, expert thieves and rob-

bers. Their chief occupation is husbandry. They supply Europeans with the fruits of their labour, live themselves on those of their genius, frequently refuse paying the customary tribute to Ardrah, throw off their submission to the king, make incursions into the neighbouring kingdoms, and in particular rob and spoil the towns on the borders of Ardrah, by way of retribution (1).

(1) Barbot, p. 345.

circumference,

circumference, surrounded by a deep ditch, supplied with water from a rivulet that runs into it. The Dutch and English had factories here; but of late years the latter is withdrawn. After the conquest of Ardrah, the palace of Jachen was burnt to the ground, notwithstanding the prince paid his submission to the king of Dahomay. How the accident arose we are not informed. Smith, indeed, affirms, that the phidalgo at first resisted Truro Audati, and that the natives made an obstinate defence; but we are told by Snelgrave and other good authors, that no attack upon the town was ever made; Lamb and the other Europeans surrendering themselves, and the phidalgo yielding submission to Audati upon the first summons<sup>b</sup>.

North of Jachen stands Offra, a considerable city, where the English and Dutch have each a handsome house or factory. Here the Dutch in particular carry on a great trade, and live with a splendor proportioned to their profits. Still farther north, between Offra and the capital, is situated Great Foro, in which is erected an inn for the accommodation of passengers, who are plentifully supplied with eatables, such as the country produces, and pito beer remarkably good. This town is populous, but inferior in beauty to the others we have mentioned. Next stands the metropolis, called Assen by the natives, and Great Ardrah by the Europeans. It is the residence of the kings of Ardrah, and a fine city, five or six leagues in circuit. Here the royal family has two palaces, the one only inhabited, the other reserved for a retreat in case of fire or other accidents. The dimensions which the Negroes give to this city are not improbable, if we consider the breadth of the streets, and the space between every house, as a security against the effects of fire; each house being likewise inclosed by its own rampart, forming a court round it, as a farther precaution against this dangerous element. D'Elbec, who visited this city in 1669, says, that you enter it by four gates; whereas other writers affirm, that notwithstanding its great extent, it has but one gate; an improbable circumstance that requires the testimony of the best authority. The walls of mud, are high and thick, firm and compact as stone and lime. The gates front each other, and are defended by deep ditches on the inside. Over these you pass by a draw-bridge, which may either be raised up, or entirely taken away at pleasure. Over each gate is a guard-room for the accommodation of the

*Descripti-  
on of the  
chief  
towns.*

<sup>b</sup> Des Marchais. tom. ii. p. 222.



officers and soldiers, intrusted with the keys of the city; and upon each side stands a file of musqueteers, with drawn swords in their hands. The Euphrates encompasses one half of the city. The buildings are of clay, covered with straw, and the streets kept in the utmost order, free from filth and every inconvenience <sup>c</sup>.

Both the royal palaces are surrounded with high walls of earth and clay, that bind like cement, and are firm and smooth as plaster. They consist of large courts, with long wide galleries, supported by beautiful pillars finely ornamented. Under these arcades the natives have the privilege of walking. The buildings are two stories high, with long narrow slips of windows, perfectly adapted to the climate, as they occasion a great draught of fresh air. The floors of all the apartments are covered with silk carpets, or fine mats, of a pretty taste. In each was a single armed-chair, a variety of silk and brocade cushions, tables, folding screens, Japan cabinets, and chests of the finest China porcelain. The windows were hung with curtains of taffety, and shaded with white cloth, glazed in a manner that admitted the light, but excluded the night air. The gardens were spacious, and laid out in the most delicate taste, in fine long walks, shaded by odoriferous trees, and lined on each side with shrubs and flowers, of a sweet smell and pleasing colours. Nothing could be more beautiful than the elegant parterres, the fanciful grass plats, joined by serpentine walks and groves, and refreshed by the cooling murmur of a dimpling brook, which glided over shining pebbles <sup>d</sup>. But we speak of what the palace of Ardrah has been, not what it is, since the reduction of the kingdom by the king of Dahomay.

Besides the capital, and above mentioned towns, Ardrah has others surrounded by walls. The natives boast chiefly of Jajo and Ba, the one three days journey from Jachen, the other half a league farther. Jajo, or Jago, has two gates to the south, and is washed by the river on the north, that falls into the Rio de Formosa, or river of Benin, at Ba, where the Dutch have a small factory. If in the whole kingdom there are any towns unwalled, it is because their natural situation and strength render the assistance of art unnecessary; and yet we see that all these precautions could not secure them against a warlike nation, led on by a brave and politic prince. Between all the

<sup>c</sup> Vid. *auſt. cit. ubi ſupra.* & ſeq.

<sup>d</sup> Barbot, p. 345.

cities are great roads, cut extremely commodious for travellers and traders, who have an easy method of transporting their merchandize. There are also deep canals cut from one river to another; these are constantly filled with canoes, either for pleasure or business, which give the country an air of wealth and industry. The vallies are pleasant, and produce wheat, millet, yams, potatoes, lemons, oranges, cocoa-nuts, and palm-wine. In the low and marshy grounds near the sea, they make salt by evaporation of the stagnated water; with which commodity they drive a great trade to the interior countries of Alghemi and Oyco, by the great canal of Ba, the finest in the kingdom. Here may be seen myriads of canoes, going and returning either with salt, gold dust, or the commodities of the countries to which they carry their salt. But however convenient for trade and industry the fine roads and canals of Ardrah might be, they were the great means of its conquest, as by them the victorious Truro Audati found it an easy matter, not only to march his army into the country, but to supply himself with provisions, ammunition, and every necessary.

*Produce of Ardrah.*

As to the air, it is in general unwholesome, and disagrees with Europeans. Out of five that are seized with any disorder, hardly four ever recover; but the small-pox is the disease most common and most fatal. The natives who escape the ravages of this cruel disease, are robust, healthy, vigorous, and long-lived. Here the people prefer the language of Alghemi to their vernacular tongue, esteeming it more elegant, sweet, and sonorous. No letters or written characters of either of these languages are in use, but the king and nobility speak, read, and write the Portuguese fluently. The vulgar, who can neither write nor read, use a small cord tied in knots, to each of which they affix certain ideas, and by these means convey their sentiments to a distance. It is a kind of cypher, where the parties must settle certain preliminaries before they are able to correspond. There is, however, a great deal of genius in this contrivance, and prodigious memory necessary to the execution of it, with a tolerable degree of accuracy; yet it is surprising with what facility they retain and combine the ideas first annexed to each knot.

*Small pox epidemical and fatal at Ardrah.*

*The Ardrahian method of corresponding by a cypher.*

\* Bosman, Epist. 20.

† Des Marchais, tom. ii. p. 234.

*Their  
dresses.*

There is no great difference in the manners, dress, or religion of the Ardrans from those of the Whidans. The court dress, like the Persian, consists of two silk or brocade paans or petticoats, with a broad scarf drawn across the breast and shoulders, in the manner of a sash. The king wears a kind of laced coif, with a long appendage behind a small crown of fragrant wood, and a whip with a wrought handle, curiously ornamented. The people of inferior distinction wear each five or six paans one over another, of cotton cloth, the manufacture of the country. Those who can afford it, have them set off with ornaments of gold studs, hanging loose, so as to make a tinkling noise. Although the ordinary custom of the country is to leave the upper part of the body naked, yet many persons of distinction wear a short sattin mantle over the shoulders, by way of morning dress. In visits, and upon ceremonious occasions, this is laid aside, and the natural black skin preferred, as more beautiful and becoming. The marbut, or high priest, has a long piece of white cotton wrapped round him, plaited in a pretty taste. He likewise covers his thighs and legs with long cotton drawers, and his feet with slippers or sandals of red leather. On his head he wears a cap, or European hat, a large couteau with a gilt head by his side, and a cane in his hand. The marbut alone stands covered in the king's presence: as for the nobility, they pull off their caps and slippers, before they enter the presence-chamber. But the women carry their passion for dress and finery to an extravagant height. You shall see them cloathed with loads of the finest sattins, chintzes and brocades, adorned with a profusion of gold, and panting under the weight of their ornaments. Nor is this altogether the fault of the women, it is owing in a great measure to the false taste of the men, who never think a woman genteely dressed, without she be oppressed with superfluous bales of silk or sattin. One custom both sexes have in common, and that is the most scrupulous regard to cleanliness, and keeping their bodies neat and sweet. They both wash and perfume themselves with civet and aromatic herbs, every morning and evening; nor does a woman ever presume to receive the caresses of her husband, before she has performed this just duty.



The usual food all over the kingdom consists of pork, beef, mutton, goats and dogs flesh, together with rice, fruits, roots, pulse, and all kinds of vegetables ; which they indiscriminately call by the name of kade. Their bread is made into cakes or kankis, and their drink composed of pito and water mixed. *Their method of living.*

The men have here the same liberty as at Whidah, of taking as many women as they are able to maintain. No great ceremony is observed in matters of love ; the great liberty enjoyed by single women, whose general carriage is loose and lascivious, affords abundance of opportunities for making and receiving addressees. Birth and fortune are seldom regarded. The men of the lowest class pretend to women of the highest quality, love qualifies alone, sets all degrees upon a level, regulates the conduct of parents in unequal matches, and makes all the parties happy. Notwithstanding this toleration, men seldom look for wives out of their own class : as they chiefly associate with those, so their choice is generally confined among them. The king's favourite woman is honoured with the title of queen, and enjoys the strange prerogative of selling the other concubines, when the king is deficient in his disbursements. The nobility marry young ladies of quality, of nine or ten years of age : they take them home to their houses, keep them naked in quality of slaves, and defer the consummation of their nuptials, till nature indicates their maturity. Upon this occasion they present them with cloaths ; and now the feast is kept, which consists in profuse eating, and riotous drinking and mirth. Liquors are likewise distributed to all the relations, acquaintance, and neighbours of either party. The mode of courtship is extremely concise, the gallant using no other ceremony, than presenting the object of his love with a callico paan, and her relations with some pots of pito. After this offering he declares to the company, that he will marry the lady, whom he names ; she grants her consent, and the courtship and marriage are ended all at once <sup>b</sup>. Yet though polygamy is permitted, adultery is no less frequent than in countries where the men are confined to one woman. *Polygamy permitted at Ardrah.*

*Marriage ceremonies.*

Writers observe, that the climate of Ardrah is unfavourable to the propagation of the species, it seldom happening that a woman ever becomes mother of more than two or three children. One extraordinary notion, consi-

<sup>b</sup> Barbot. ubi supra.

dering the inequality of births, prevails in this country; it is, that a woman delivered of twins is reputed an adulteress, because they cannot conceive how a woman, who has confined her caresses to one man, should bring forth two children.

*The method  
of tilling  
the earth  
at Ardrah.*

The inhabitants of the sea-coast employ themselves in fishing and making salt, which, as we have said, they send to the interior countries. Those within land are all husbandmen, farmers, and graziers. They cultivate the earth by the strength of their arms, and as the scripture has it, with the "sweat of their brow;" for here are no ploughs or instruments of husbandry to ease the labourer; all is performed with the spade and mattock, whence the ground is more thoroughly broke, and the grain better covered: Wherever husbandry is wholly pursued, the country discovers evident marks of the skill and pains bestowed upon it. The whole is divided in the nicest order. Here stands a plat of maize, there a field of wheat: on one side grow pease, cabbages, and all sorts of culinary greens; on the other potatoes and roots; every separate article being divided by a double row of fruit-trees, and the whole inclosed by tall strait trees, either for ornament or use, the boughs of which afford a pleasing and cooling shade to the labourer, spent with fatigue and the scorching beams of the sun<sup>1</sup>.

*Funeral ob-  
sequies at  
Ardrah.*

The manner of burying the dead in Ardrah differs only in particular circumstances from what we shall relate in our account of the Gold Coast. There the relations of the deceased furnish the winding-sheet and cloaths in which the body was wrapped; here that expence falls upon the governor of the place, who adds it to the king's account. Besides, instead of a public burying-place, the natives of Ardrah are interred in their own houses, where there is a vault appropriated for the dead. All funeral obsequies are performed with great pomp and magnificence. Be the person ever so much despised in his lifetime, he is respected at his death; nor does the king's interment differ from that of his subjects, only that three months after his death, a certain number of slaves are sacrificed to his manes, and buried by his side.

*Govern-  
ment.*

As to the government, it is monarchical and despotic. The king, styled of Ardrah Alghemi, and sometimes of Jachen, is absolute, and approached with prostration.

<sup>1</sup> Des March. tom. ii. p. 156.

His court is numerous and splendid. The chief priest is second in dignity, and prime minister in spirituals and temporals. Phidalgos are appointed governors of every town, dependent on the king, who, though to little purpose, generally raise by seizures, confiscation, and extortion, immense estates, which often excite the avarice of the king, and occasion their death or banishment. Nothing can be more pompous than the king's public appearance: he is preceded by the master of the horse, bearing the sword of state, and supported on foot by two chief officers, the general of horse on the right hand, and the captain of commerce on the left, with down-cast eyes, and bended bodies; the whole followed by a numerous train of nobility, and next of gentry, dressed in robes proper for the occasion. The prince royal and high-priest enjoy the exclusive privilege of talking to the king standing face to face; the other subjects of all degrees prostrate themselves, kiss the ground, and are permitted only to raise their heads to receive an answer. Every officer of the household is called captain; the high steward of the household captain of the table; the purveyor, captain of the victuals; and the cup-bearer, captain of the wine<sup>k</sup>.

The crown of Ardrah is hereditary, devolving by birth-right to the eldest son, who alone inherits the effects of the deceased king. To prevent contests and rebellion, as well as to maintain an absolute and servile dependence on the crown, no provision is made for the younger children. They serve in the army, and are raised by their merit; but never to the chief command. Others apply to trade, and acquire plentiful fortunes; for their affinity to the king, even though they are not countenanced by him, procures them numberless advantages in the course of business. Foreigners pay them extraordinary respect, and in compliment to the monarch, make them presents, and indulge them with the first offer of their goods. The other subjects treat them with great deference, and allow them advantages in bargains, which they deny to each other, either from the motives of compassion on seeing them reduced to the necessity of trade, or from a natural respect for the blood royal, of which they are unable to divest themselves.

The crown revenues arise from heavy capitations on the natives and foreigners, slaves from tributary coun-

*Order of  
Succession.*

*Revenues.*

<sup>k</sup> Bosman, Epist. 26. etiam Barbot, 328.



tries, the sale of slaves of all sorts, duties upon foreign trade, taxes upon markets and the necessaries of life, and lastly from the confiscation of the estates of governors, who have either rebelled or incurred the displeasure of the court, and the seizure of all estates got in the government's service, upon the death of the proprietor. In this case the children inherit nothing, and the unhappy wives, who have lived in the utmost pomp and luxury, are sent to work and drudge in the salt-pits; nay, some political cases occur, where the deceased king's children are made the slaves of his successor, perhaps of their own brother.

Whoever disobey the king's command is beheaded, his wives and children becoming the slaves of the crown. Insolvent debtors are sold at the pleasure of the creditor; and yet notwithstanding the rigour of the law, no country abounds more with bankrupts. The case is the same with adultery: a violation of the marriage bed is punished with servitude; a married woman who prostitutes her person to a slave, becomes the slave of her gallant's master, if he be superior in quality to her own master or husband: on the contrary, if the husband be of higher rank, the adulterer becomes his slave, and yet is the crime frequent.

*Despotism  
of the king.*

Seeing the king eat or drink, or even the dishes carried to or from table, is punished with death, and the criminal's whole family partake of the punishment, by their being enrolled slaves for life. When the king drinks, an officer makes a signal with two iron rods, for all to prostrate themselves. Des Marchais relates a melancholy instance of the consequence of disobeying this signal, though the trespass was merely accidental. A favourite child having fallen asleep by the king's side, awoke at the noise of the rods, and was unfortunate enough to cast his eyes on his majesty, while he was drinking: the high-priest ordered the infant to be killed on the spot; nor did the king offer to intercede for him. On the contrary, the priest sprinkled his cloaths and body with the blood of the little innocent: an inhuman ceremony they imagined necessary to expiate a crime of so black a complexion, and prevent direful consequences<sup>1</sup>.

*A cruel in-  
stance of  
this.*

In every town the wives of freemen are sent by turns to certain schools, where female accomplishments are taught.

<sup>1</sup> Des March. ubi sup.

Here they learn the exercises for five or six months, in a house belonging to the high priest. Old women instruct them in dancing and singing, the voice being accompanied by the jingling of bits of iron and copper, suspended to their legs and arms, with which they beat measure. They are forced to dance and sing with such violence, and for so long a time, that their spirits being fatigued, spent, and exhausted, they drop down with faintness. Parties succeed each other day and night in this frantic and extravagant employment; nor can a woman come better recommended to her husband, than by holding out longer than any other in the company <sup>m</sup>.

Europeans are permitted to travel only by night; and through by-roads, to prevent their making remarks on the country; there have been many instances, however, wherein they have been exempted from this general restriction. They are treated with great civility by the natives, and the king entertains at his own expence all merchants who come to Assen upon business. Apartments are appointed them in the palace, and distinct quarters to each nation. At an audience the king distinguishes them with particular marks of regard and friendship, by taking and pressing their hands in his own, touching their fore-fingers three times, placing them by his side on mats spread on the floor, and dispatching their affairs with expedition; nor is the respect and amity shewn them by the prince royal and high priest inferior; the same motives of policy and hospitality actuate each. The Dutch drive a considerable trade with Ardrah; that of the English, without being so extensive, is extremely profitable. This commerce consisting of provisions, slaves, cotton, cloths, and a blue stone called acori or aigris, is settled with the king or high priest. Captains of European ships, who are conducted and introduced to court by the phidalgo, or governor of Praya, present the king with coral, Cyprus cloths, morees, and damask, for customs and liberty of trading. The queen, the prince, and the high priest, are likewise presented with coral, damask napkins, and armoisin. Beads, or brass rings and bujiis, are given to the soello, or captain of white men, to the court dancers and porters. Licence is proclaimed at a village four miles to the south south-west of Praya, called by the Dutch Stockvis Dorp, upon the captain's return from Assen: and warehouses are appointed for lodging and selling the goods. Forty

<sup>m</sup> Ibid. etiam Le Croix, tom. iii. p. 150.

brass rings, twenty hens, one goat, and a piece of kanchin, or a little armoisin, are paid to the crier. The honga, or captain of the bar, whose duty it is to attend the beach, and direct the landing of all goods, is paid for twelve trips of a canoe to and from the ship to the beach, to the value of a slave in effects. When the sale is ended, the king receives in acknowledgement of his favour a second present, consisting of two musquets, twenty-five pounds of powder, and merchandize to the amount of nine slaves. The foello, honga, and inferior officers are also presented a second time with armoisin, &c. The customs and duties paid by each ship, great or small, amount in the whole to seventy or eighty slaves. The king has the first choice of goods, whether in the payment of duties, or in exchange for slaves; the hereditary prince the second, the merchant prince the third, the marbut the fourth, and afterwards the great officers of the court. With respect to the people, the general price of goods is regulated by a tariff; when differences arise, they are terminated by the king's decision. The slaves annually exported to the number of three thousand are prisoners made in war, contributions levied upon tributary princes, criminals whose punishments are changed into slavery, slaves born, or the children of slaves, insolvent debtors sold for the benefit of the creditor, or the wives, and relations to a certain degree of all who disobey the king, or incur the lash of the royal displeasure<sup>n</sup>.

Goods proper for importation are large white beads, large glass or crystal ear-rings, gilt hangers, iron bars, sailors knives, copper bells, of cylindric and conic forms, guns, copper and brass basons of all kinds, coloured taffeties, striped pinked silks, fine coloured handkerchiefs, long white horse-tails, looking-glasses, large umbrellas, brandy, china, Indian silks, gold and silver in dust, with English and Dutch crowns. By the last great profits are gained; ten crowns being the highest price for a slave: but bujiis or cowries, which are the currency of the country, are the best commodities. Europeans, in all bargains for slaves, pay half bujiis; or, if they run scarce, one-third in bujiis and the remainder in goods. There are public markets all over the country for salt. One is established at Ba, another is held round a lofty tree with spreading boughs, about six leagues distant; others in other places, at each of which three or four thousand African merchants attend with goods from all parts. The

<sup>n</sup> Barbot, *ubi supra*.



manner of reckoning the bujiis is the same here as at Whidah<sup>o</sup>.

With regard to the martial abilities of the Ardraians; *Military power of Ardrah.* authors differ extremely. Some charge them with the most effeminate cowardice, while others characterise them as a hardy bold people. Perhaps both accounts may be reconciled by comparing the different circumstances at the times when those authors wrote. If we form our judgment upon the event of the war with the king of Dahomay, we may be led to attribute their misfortunes to their pusillanimity: if, on the contrary, we judge from the extent of the kingdom and the number of states tributary to Ardrah, it may reasonably be inferred, that once the people had been martial, however they might have degenerated. All authors indeed agree, that they fought in a tumultuous manner, without order, or any plan of operations, and with great cruelty: no great proof either of courage or conduct. Barbot and Bosman affirm, that the king of Ardrah, with his dependent countries, has twenty times the strength of Whidah; yet did he never gain any advantages over that little nation, or even venture to declare war, though the kings lived in a state of perpetual hostilities. This allegation may be true, and yet no reflection upon the courage of the Ardraians. It was an easy matter for a populous compact kingdom, like Whidah, to defend itself against the attempts of an enemy more powerful, and as brave as itself. The extensive frontiers of Ardrah exposed her to the continual incursions of all the neighbouring states: the number of tributary provinces, that watched an opportunity of throwing off the yoke, rendered it dangerous for her to enter afresh into war; and perhaps a peaceable reign might have contributed to confirm the political maxims of the government. But not to reason, we shall proceed to facts. An army of forty thousand horse and foot is easily raised by the king; none being exempted from taking the field besides old men and children. On the maritime coasts, musquets and swords are the soldiers weapons; in the interior country they use bows and arrows, lances, javelins, and wooden clubs. In all expeditions they carry a pole, bent in form of an S, with silk flags and colours at the extremity. Their drums are long, and sharp-pointed at the lower end. Bells make a part of their military music; and while they ring, the soldiers throw their bodies into a variety of antic postures

\* Bosm. Epist. 20.

and contortions. The horse make use of trumpets, of a small size and shrill animating tone. These instruments are also the music at festivals and public rejoicings for victory, which they keep with great solemnity. But, besides musical instruments, the army is attended by bards or story-tellers, to rouse and animate the men, by the relation of valorous actions, and amuse and divert them, by buffoonery and scenes of comic humour <sup>p</sup>.

*Religion.*

Voyagers take notice of considerable differences between the religions of Ardrah and Whidah. Although the natives of Ardrah are perhaps the least addicted to superstition of any people upon the coast, yet the number of their priests is infinite; and persons of the highest distinction deem it an honour to treat them in their houses. Most of the nobility keep feticheers, or chaplains, under the direction of the high priest; who appoints an idol for the worship of every family. Some have an alligator, some have a bird like a crow, and mountains, trees, and stones have their votaries. Notwithstanding they are thus plunged into the grossest idolatry, and void of all notions of a future state, yet have they some confused ideas of a Supreme Being, who directs the time and occasions of their births and deaths. They believe likewise in his power over their good or evil fortune. They are alarmed at the smallest accident, and shrink at the thoughts of death. Their feticheers are respected in general; but the marbut, or chief priest, is held in the highest esteem and veneration: he is believed able to foretel future events, by conversing with an image, of the size of a young child, which he keeps in the audience-chamber. This image is painted white, according to their notion of the devil, and reveals the arrival of European ships six months before. Families assemble every six months, to interrogate this fetiche concerning their future fortune, and to perform sacrifices to him. The feticheers return answers in a low voice, which they are firmly persuaded issue from the image: such is the craft of priesthood in all ages and countries of the world, as if their authority depended upon fraud and imposture. After the oracles are delivered, the idol is covered with an earthen vessel, pierced in several places. The feticheers, whose perquisites are a butt of beer and a sack of flour, and the company, sprinkle the vessel with beer and meal mixed into a thin dough; after which a bumper is filled round in honour of the fetiche, and the

<sup>p</sup> Barbot, ubi supra. Bosm, ibid.

company withdraws, when the liquor present is ended. No business is transacted upon certain days sacred to the fetiche of the family; and this rule even the king inviolably observes; yet in most points the Ardraians relax from the rigid austerity enjoined by their priests. They do not believe in the resurrection of the dead; except where the person has fallen in battle, and fighting for his country. In this case they suppose the order of nature may be inverted, in honour of those heroes; and that they shall rise again in two days, with new features and lineaments. This they believe to be the reason why they are not recognized by their old acquaintance. The feticheers here, as at Whidah, are the only physicians the country affords. They make decoctions of certain healing herbs, and sacrifice animals, for the recovery of the sick, in their respective dwellings. The fetiche is rubbed with the blood, and the flesh is eaten, or burnt. Snelgrave relates an extraordinary instance of their respect for the priesthood, those doctors of soul and body. It is an inviolable law, he observes, that in whatever house near the palace a fire should chance to break out, the master of that house, with all his family, suffer death. Nothing can be more unjust and cruel than this law: but it is attended with happy consequences; fewer accidents from fire occurring in Ardrah than in any other kingdom, as the law is executed with unrelenting rigour on all degrees of men. Yet when the royal palace at Jachen was burnt down, though it was well known that the fire began in a priest's house, and strongly suspected that he had kindled it with design, the affair was hushed up, and no enquiry made.

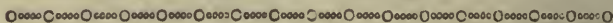
As authors have not minutely described the manners, laws, and government of this kingdom, the reader must content himself with such detached pieces of history as they afford. While Barbot resided at Ardrah, there arrived in that city the ambassadors of a mighty inland prince. Their instructions were, to represent to the king the grievances of his subjects, who had complained to the king their master of the despotism of his government. They were ordered to declare to his majesty, that, if he did not loosen the reins, and govern with moderation and equity, the king their master would think himself obliged, in defence of humanity, to march his army into the country, for the protection of those who sought his assistance. This menace the monarch of Ardrah received

9 Snelgrave apud Prevost, tom. v. ad fin.



*Wars of  
Ardrah.*

with anger; and, to shew his contempt, ordered the ambassadors to be punished. After this insult, the inland prince marched an army of a million of men, says our author, into Ardrah; who, carrying terror and desolation every-where, laid almost the whole kingdom waste; then the general withdrew his troops. An extraordinary method of relieving the distress of his supplicants! The king his master was highly displeased at his retiring so soon, and ordered him to be put to death, because he had not brought him the head of the king of Ardrah: "for which (says he) I sent you, and not to ruin his innocent subjects." Such was the terror struck by this nation, that the Ardrahians cannot bear their name mentioned without horror. The Negroes relate a thousand terrible stories of them; among others, a custom they have of depriving their prisoners of their privy members, and adorning themselves with those indecent spoils. Barbot concludes with giving it as his opinion, that the prince here meant must have been the prince of Yos or Oyeos. His reason is, that the sea, which they are forbid by their priests from approaching, is the national fetiche: a reason that rather proves this conqueror to be the king of Dahomay, unless both kingdoms agree in this object of their worship.



## C H A P. LIII.

### *History of the Gold Coast.*

#### S E C T. I.

*The Origin of the French, Portuguese, Dutch, and English Commerce, on the Coast of Guinea, and more particularly on the Gold Coast.*

*Introduction to the  
Gold Coast.*

**H**AVING already described the kingdoms of Benin, Whidah, and Ardrah, with some other states contained under the general division of the Slave Coast, we now come to give an account of the Gold Coast, or Guinea Proper. As this division is not only better known, but also of more importance to Euro-

<sup>r</sup> Prevost, tom. iv. p. 127, & seq.

peans in general, and particularly to this nation, we shall beg leave to describe it with all the minuteness which the best authorities will admit of, adding to the testimony of writers some farther particulars we have received from some gentlemen long resident at Cape Coast, and perfectly acquainted with the manners, customs, government, produce, and trade of the country.

The Gold Coast acquired that name from the immense quantity of the precious metal which it produces. According to the best charts founded upon the latest observations, the situation of the Gold Coast is between 40 deg. 30 min. and 8 deg. north latitude; and 16 deg. and 18 deg. 4 min. of longitude, beginning at the river Ankobar, and extending to the Rio Volta, that is, about one hundred and thirty leagues from west to east<sup>a</sup>. Smith makes some variation in its dimensions; but as his assertions are confirmed by no reasons, we shall adhere to Prevôt's account. The French and Portuguese dispute the discovery of this coast. Villant and Robbé are positive that Nigritia and Guinea were known to the French above an hundred years before the Portuguese began their discoveries. The one goes as high as the year 1346; the other fixes the date of this discovery in the year 1364. It was this year, according to Robbé, that some merchants of Dieppe made a number of trading voyages to the Cape de Verd islands, penetrating as far as Sestro Paris on the Grain or Malaguetta Coast. A. D. 1382 the merchants of Dieppe and Rouen jointly sent three ships to make discoveries on the same coast. One of the ships, called the Vierge, sailed to Commendo, and thence to the spot where the village Elmina stands, which had its name from the quantity of gold supposed to be dug out of the mines in the country. The following year the same merchants built a strong house or factory here; for the defence of which they left twelve men, which colony was for some years increasing. In 1387 it was so considerable, that they built a chapel, and the trade continued to flourish till 1413, when the civil wars in France occasioned its falling into decay. The Normans were soon forced to abandon not only Elmina, but also Sestro Paris, Cape Monte, Sierra Leona, the Cape de Verds, and all their other establishments (A).

*Geographical description of the coast of Guinea, or that division called the Gold Coast.*

Villant

<sup>a</sup> Atlas Universel, par M. Robert, & M. T. Vangondy. Prevost, tom. v. lib. ix. cap. 4.

(A) Where Robbé picked know not. Certain it is, that up all this ancient history we he brings but lame proofs to support

*History of  
this disco-  
very.*

Villant supports the claim of his nation by a relation somewhat different. But if we admit those facts, it must appear a little extraordinary that the greatest French historians, neither Serres nor Mezeray, should ever once mention them. Enterprizes of such a nature would seem to merit their attention, especially in the infancy of commerce, and when long voyages excited universal admiration, and were regarded as miracles. Besides, not the smallest testimony appears in any Portuguese historian, in support of their conjecture, that Fort Elmina was built by the French in 1383. Nay Azambuja, who undertook to fortify that place in 1484, appears to be ignorant of there having ever before his time been a fortification there. From this silence of the best French and Portuguese historians, we may conclude, that the assertions of Robbé and Villant are bold and hardy, corroborated rather by the silence of the opposite side, then proved by the arguments they bring, and founded more upon prejudice and national attachment, than upon authority.

*Origin of  
the Portu-  
guese settle-  
ments on  
the coast of  
Africa.*

The Portuguese, continues Villant, who knew nothing beyond Cape Verd, observing the great advantages drawn by the Dieppers from their commerce to Guinea for the space of fifty years, fitted out a ship at Lisbon, under the protection of Don Henry, for the sole purpose of making discoveries along the coast. Alphonso the First at that time reigned in Portugal. The ship arriving on the Guinea Coast in the rainy season, all the crew, unaccustomed to such a climate, fell into diseases of different kinds, which made such terrible havock of them, that they resolved to leave so unhospitable a shore; but being ignorant of the tides, winds, and the navigation of those seas, they were driven on an island in the gulph of Guinea, which they called St. Thomas, because they happened to arrive on that saint's festival. The liberal supplies they found here of all necessaries, made them regard this incident as the peculiar favour of heaven to them, at a time when the crazy condition of their ship had rendered their situation

support the claim of his countrymen to the discovery. One of the most notable arguments for their having built Elmina, is, that after a number of revolutions, one of the bastions of the fort still bore the name of the French bastion, and had

distinctly those cyphers 13 : —wrote upon it. But these might as well be the last as the first cyphers of the date. In short, he proves nothing but his being possessed of a fruitful invention.

very



very distressful. Here the Portuguese made a considerable stay, laying the first foundation of a colony on the island. After having repaired their vessel, they set sail for Lisbon, where they arrived in 1454. The court of Portugal, eager in the pursuit of wealth, and warm in the interests of commerce, soon equipped another fleet, to secure and strengthen this infant colony. They pushed their discoveries as far as Benin, and in process of time arrived in the road of Akra, on the Gold Coast, where they procured a great quantity of gold. On their return, the governor of St. Thomas fitted out three caravals, having on board a number of adventurers, and materials for building factories on different parts of the coast. These vessels arrived at Elmina four years after the departure of the French <sup>b</sup>.

Purchas relates, that Alphonso having but little leisure for pushing discoveries, towards the latter end of his reign, formed or gave an exclusive privilege for five years to Fernando Gomez, a citizen of Lisbon, to sail to the coast of Africa. By agreement he was every year to discover three hundred miles, beginning at Sierra Leona, and advancing along the coast <sup>c</sup>.

This Gomez it was that sent out Santaren and Scovane, says Purchas; Escobar (according to Marmot), who discovered Elmina, and to Cape St. Catherine, south of the equinoctial. During this period, were also discovered the islands of St. Thomas, St. Matthew, Annobon, and del Principe. In the year 1681, John the Second, resolving to encourage and support the commercial spirit of his subjects, sent ten caravals laden with stores and every thing necessary for building a fort, and houses for a colony, under the conduct of Jago Azambuja, or according to Purchas, Diego Dezambuja. This general arriving on the coast, sent notice to Kasamanfa, prince of the country, to come on board to ratify the treaty concluded with him by the former Portuguese ships. Mean while he possessed himself of a little eminence, capable of containing five hundred houses, as a situation the most commodious for a fort. Here he hoisted the Portuguese standard on St. Sebastian's day; a name that was given to the neighbouring valley, where the Portuguese landed. Soon after their landing, Azanibuja perceiving that the Negro prince with his retinue was approaching, drew up his men in

<sup>b</sup> Prevost, tom. v. lib. ix. cap. 4.  
tom. i. p. 7.

<sup>c</sup> Purchas's Pilgrims,

order, and seated himself in a great chair in the center. He was richly dressed in gold brocade, with a gold collar set with diamonds. All his attendants were clothed in silks, and every thing set off with the utmost magnificence, in order to strike the Negroes with high notions of the wealth and power of the Portuguese. Nor did Kasamanfa on his part neglect any thing which could set off the state, the puissance, and the pride of his nation. He was attended by a strong corps of Negroes, all armed after their manner, and attended by warlike music, which made a horrible noise. The chief officers were dressed in their hostile apparel, each followed by two pages, the one carrying his shield, the other his weapons of offence. All had their hair and beards finely adorned with gold and other ornaments, interlaced with garlands, or wore in like beads. After the first salutations, Azambuja entered upon a formal discourse, in which he expatiated on the great power of the king his master, the affection he bore Kasamanfa, his desire of carrying on a commerce to the mutual advantage of both their nations, and lastly his request, that he might be permitted to build a fort for the protection and security of this commerce. Kasamanfa, who was a sensible politic prince, raised several objections against this proposal, but at length consented to it; and next day Azambuja began his work. Stones were drawn from the neighbouring quarries, for erecting the fort and houses; but the Negroes began to shew marks of displeasure, both on account of the respect and worship they pay to stones and rocks, and because they disliked seeing themselves curbed, and hemmed in by strong works. However, they were appeased by presents; and so diligently did the Portuguese labour, that in less than a month, their fort was in a state of defence. The materials they had brought were so artfully contrived, that the workmen had nothing more to do than lay them upon each other. Azambuja having succeeded no less happily in his trade for gold, returned loaded with immense wealth. Upon this occasion, whatever the French writers may allege, it is probable the fort St. George de la Mina, or Elmina, had its first rise.

John, the successor of Alphonso, conferred many privileges on this new colony; he made Mina a city, and lavished his gifts and immunities on it: he ordered a church to be built, which he dedicated to St. George; and it was ordained, that all those who for the future should make discoveries along the south coast of Africa, should erect a monument

monument of square stone, six feet high, with the arms of Portugal engraved, and a Latin and Portuguese inscription, bearing the date of such discovery, the reign in which it was made, and the admiral or discoverer's name.

A few years after, the same prince established a Guinea company, with exclusive privileges. So considerable were the profits of this new corporation, that their views rising with their success, they built fort St. Andrea, near Axim, another little fort upon Akra, and a storehouse at Sama, on the river St. George, to furnish Elmina with provisions, as it had hitherto been supplied by a sort of dependence on the prince of the country. The king, however, reserved to himself the right of appointing the governors and officers of the head settlement, with a view to make those employments the reward of eminent services to the crown, and the recompence of diligence, courage, and public spirit. Thus, says Barbot, the garrison of Elmina, was in time composed of officers equally poor and covetous, and of soldiers accustomed to war, plunder, and rapine<sup>d</sup>. When to these were joined all the felons and other malefactors of Portugal, whose crimes were thought too slight to merit a gibbet, can it be wondered, that in all historians we meet with the most hideous pictures of Portuguese violence, cruelty, and inhumanity?

In the reign of Henry III. of France, tranquility being for a time restored to the kingdom, the French began to renew their voyages to the Grain and Gold Coast: but such was the terror the Portuguese had struck into the natives, that they were afraid to accept of any overtures made by the French. At length the inhabitants of Akra were provoked to the highest pitch of indignation, by some severities committed by the Portuguese; they attacked the little fort situated in this province, massacred the garrison, and rased the walls to the ground. Henceforward the credit of the Portuguese began to decline. From 1578, when this occurrence happened, we may date the first beginnings of the commerce of other Europeans to the coast of Guinea. Others now shared in that wealth, which had long been engrossed by the Portuguese; but this change was not accomplished without great loss of blood on all sides. Numbers of French, in particular, lost their lives, not only by the hands of the Portuguese, but by those of the Negroes also, who had a large premium given them for every French head they brought to the Portuguese

*After the civil wars, the French renew their voyages to Guinea.*

*Quarrels between the French and Portuguese.*

<sup>d</sup> Barbot. ubi supra.



fort. These heads were set up and exposed on the walls of Elmina, a barbarity which intimidated the French merchants, and made them once more abandon the Guinea trade. Artus of Nantzick has left us a curious account of their conduct, from the destruction of the Portuguese fort near Akra, till their total expulsion from that coast<sup>c</sup>.

*Success of  
the Dutch.*

The Portuguese,\* he says, did not confine themselves to the extirpation of the French only; the same severities they used against other Europeans, and even against the private merchants of their own nation, who were hardy enough to encroach on their privileges. Their ships and cargoes were confiscated, and the crews put to death. The Dutch were the only Europeans who continued firm to their interest, in contempt of dangers and difficulties. Their perseverance was crowned with success, and at last they made themselves masters of the forts of Elmina and Axim, obtaining that security by their courage, which the Portuguese had lost by their insolence and cruelty. In what manner they used their good fortune, is a point we shall at present pass over. Certain it is, that if any credit be due to the Portuguese historians, neither natives or foreigners had any reason to rejoice in the change of masters; for, to the pride and barbarity of the Portuguese, the Dutch added a species of cool brutality, peculiar to that phlegmatic people. The rebels, says Vasconcellos, speaking of the Dutch, owed their success more to debauchery and drunkenness, than to courage. They stuck at no means to accomplish their ends; fraud and force were the same to them, so that they arrived at the same end. They first ruined the morals of the natives, and perverted their understandings, after which they became the fit tools of their wicked designs. Wine, spirits, and the indolence of the Portuguese, were in fact the true instruments of their good fortune. By these they raised themselves to be masters, or rather pirates, so formidable by their numbers, that they seized the forts of Bourtri, Cora, Cormantin, Aldin de Fuerto, and Commendo. In the end they got possession of Elmina itself, and for the space of many years carried on so peaceable and profitable a commerce, that their returns from thence amounted to little less than two millions in gold, besides other commodities. The quantity of merchandize, which they exported thither from Europe, and the good bargains they

<sup>c</sup> Prevost, *ibid.*

gave the Negroes, raised them high at first in the esteem of those barbarians, who soon found reason to consider their fair and honest dealing as a bait to lead them to their destruction. Such are the words of Vasconcellos, an historian who may be supposed strongly prejudiced against the Dutch; although it must be owned, that his report of their conduct here bears but too strong a resemblance to their behaviour in the Indies, and wherever they propose to settle colonies<sup>f</sup>.

The first Dutchman who led the way to Guinea, was one Bernard Erick. This man had made the proposal to some merchants in Holland. The scheme was thought so rational, that a ship was fitted out; the command given to Erick, and a rich cargo sent by him in 1595. Running along the Gold Coast, Erick established a correspondence with the natives; he treated them with great civility, shewed them a variety of fine goods at an easy rate, and entirely alienated their affections from the Portuguese. The Portuguese governors were however not wanting in their endeavours to crush rivals they foresaw would be dangerous. They represented the Dutch as rebels and traitors to their natural king; a lawless people, whose sole principle was the love of gain. They assured the Negroes, that however speciously they might for the present conduct themselves, their view was first to gain a footing, and afterwards to maintain and extend it by force of arms. Commerce was the pretext, but the real design, they said, was to reduce the natives to slavery. By large rewards, the governors engaged the Negroes to destroy the first vessels that should arrive on the coast; and Simon de Tave was the first victim of the Portuguese jealousy; this gentleman and all his crew being cut off by a stratagem of the Negroes. Many other misfortunes of the same nature befel the Dutch, some of which they revenged, others they patiently bore with. They had formed a strong interest among the natives; and those who still adhered to their allegiance to the Portuguese, were actuated solely by the force of rewards, or fear of punishment. At length by their intrigues with the king of Sabo, they obtained permission to build a fort three leagues east of Cabo Corso, or Cape Coast. This fort was finished in 1624, the command of it given to captain Adrian Jacob, and the Dutch power founded in Guinea, at the time the states were engaged in a war with Philip the IVth of Spain.

*Origin of  
the Dutch  
commerce  
with Gui-  
nea.*

<sup>f</sup> Hist. Generale des Voyages, tom. v. liv. ix. chap. 4.

It was in the year following, that the Dutch formed their design against the fort of St. George d'Elmina. Their troops consisted of two hundred Hollanders, and one hundred and fifty Negroes of Sabo, led on by the vice-admiral Jean Dirks Lamb, who entered Ampona in the kingdom of Commendo. But they were entirely defeated by the Negroes of Elmina, who undertook the defence of the Portuguese. They attacked suddenly the Dutch forces as they descended a mountain, before they had time to draw up in order of battle. The action was long and obstinate, but at length the Dutch were killed almost to a man. Lamb the general was dangerously wounded, and owed his life to the seasonable succours sent by the Negroes of Commendo.

The next attempt of the Dutch upon Elmina was in the year 1637, when the West India company procured a strong squadron to be sent to the coast of Africa. This armament was commanded by colonel Hans Coine, a diligent officer, who left no measures untried, necessary to the success of the enterprize. Eight hundred soldiers, five hundred sailors, and a considerable body of Negroes were landed within a small distance of Cape Coast; provisions for three days were taken with them, and Hans Coine began his march, dividing the troops into three columns. The general, who led the rear, observing that the Negroes of Elmina, to the number of a thousand, possessed the hill of St. Jago, to prevent his seizing a post, which absolutely commanded the fort, he determined to force it, and for this purpose ordered it to be attacked by four companies of fusileers. The Negroes made so brave a resistance, that the Dutch were cut in pieces, the heads of the slain fixed upon spears, and carried in triumph to the fort. However, another party conducted by major Bongarcon, crossing the river Dona by a ford, attacked the hill on the other side with such vigour, that the Negroes, after a great loss and an obstinate conflict, were forced to surrender the fruits of their late victory, and abandon the important post of St. Jago. Bongarcon, leaving a strong guard here, pursued his march, and happily rejoined the army in spite of all the endeavours of the Portuguese to cut off his communication. The Portuguese and their Negroes despairing of being able to keep their ground on the plain, retired to a redoubt they still



held on the declivity of mount St. Jago. Here they were again attacked by colonel Coine. The redoubt was covered on the one side by a wood. Coine, who perceived this, and that only two paths led to it, one across the ford of the river, the other through the wood, ordered two pieces of cannon and a mortar to be drawn up through the latter, and so advantageously pointed, that after forcing the enemy to abandon the redoubt, a battery was raised, which played with great success upon the fort of Elmina. After the siege had continued for two days, and the event became doubtful, by reason of the courage of the besieged, and the perseverance of the besiegers, the Dutch received a strong reinforcement under the conduct of the Dutch commander in chief, Van Ypren. This officer, to cut off all delay, summoned the garrison, declaring in the most positive terms, they should without distinction be put to the sword, if they stood an assault. The Portuguese governor desired three days to determine, and the Dutch general refused it, assembling all his forces for storming the walls. This conduct had the desired effect; the garrison hanging out a white flag, and beating a parley. Two officers from the governor waited on Van Ypren to regulate the articles of surrender; but no others would be granted than submitting at discretion. The general however consented to the following terms; that the governor and all the other Portuguese, with their wives and children, without their effects, ensigns, arms, or provisions, should immediately evacuate the fort. That all the merchandize, the gold, slaves, &c. should remain the property of the conquerors. That all the ornaments of the church, except such as were of the precious metals, might be carried away. And that the Portuguese and Mulattoes should be transported to the island of St. Thomas<sup>b</sup>.

*The Dutch  
take the  
fort St.  
George  
d'Elmina.*

Thus it was, that the Dutch entered upon the possession of the celebrated fortress of St. George d'Elmina, on the 29th of August, 1637. Here they found thirty pieces of cast cannon, nine thousand weight of powder, great store of other ammunition, but little gold or merchandize. Colonel Coine having appointed a governor, and a garrison of one hundred and forty Dutch, besides Negroes in the fort, returned to Mawri. Resolving to draw all possible advantage from the consternation

<sup>b</sup> Barbot, p. 166.

*Brave answer of a Portuguese governor.*

*The Dutch attack the English settlements.*

with which so rapid a conquest had struck the whole coast, the Dutch general sent a message to the governor of Axim, summoning him to surrender the place, before he should be compelled by force of arms. This was a settlement, next to Elmina, of the greatest consequence to the Portuguese; and the governor answered, with a resolution worthy of the confidence reposed in him. His reply was, that the fort had been given him to defend; that his oath, and duty to his country, obliged him to defend it; that therefore the Dutch might come as soon as they pleased, they would always find him in a condition to receive them. This bold conduct induced the Dutch for that time to lay aside the design; nor did the fort of Axim fall into their hands till the year 1642<sup>1</sup>.

After the reduction of Elmina, the Dutch doubted not but the whole trade of Guinea would soon center there, and fall into their hands. Van Ypren was ordered by the company to reside at that important place in quality of governor-general of Guinea and Angola. He applied himself assiduously to the reparation of the fortifications; he enlarged the chief building, increased the number of the houses, and was no less careful to give strength and beauty, than conveniency to the place. At first he treated the natives with great indulgence, but as soon as the English expressed an inclination to share in the trade of the country, and had for that purpose applied to the Negroes for leave to establish colonies, then was the kindness of the Dutch altered for a severity and cruelty unbecoming a nation that owes its being to commerce, and forms pretensions to civilized humanity. They even presumed openly to attack the English by seizing upon Fort Cormantin, where at that time the governor usually resided; a barefaced usurpation, that became one motive of the war in 1666, between England and the United Provinces. To keep the natives in more absolute subjection, they erected forts at Bourtry, Sama, Cape Coast, Anamaboa, and Akra, under pretence of protecting them against the frequent incursions of the inland natives, their constant enemies. They assumed a right of confining the commerce of certain places solely to themselves; even the fish caught by the poor Negroes of certain sea-ports, they prohibited, under severe penalties, from being sold at any price to other nations; although to cheapen it they

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. etiam Prevost, ubi supra.

have suffered it to rot in the market. In a word, the government they erected was despotic and arbitrary: for, they took cognizance of all affairs civil and criminal, and constituted themselves the sole judges of property, liberty, life, and death. Nevertheless, they still continued to pay the lawful sovereigns a small tribute for the lands on which they built their factories; but this they soon reimbursed themselves in, by the most unfeeling extortion, and corrupt perversion of justice.

The discontent and disaffection of the Negroes rose so high, when Barbot resided in the country, that having come to an open rupture with their imperious masters, they kept the director-general blocked up in Elmina. This quarrel, which continued for ten months, ended, after two assaults were given, in the loss of four men only on the side of the Dutch, and about fifty on that of the Negroes<sup>k</sup>. However, had those barbarians been capable of perseverance enough to continue the siege longer, St. George Elmina must probably have fallen into their hands, and been for ever lost to the Dutch. Barbot thinks their resentment against the Dutch but too well founded. He relates some of the most cruel and savage punishments inflicted upon those miserable wretches for faults merely trifling, by the Hollanders, who ought rather to have smiled at their simplicity, had they been possessed of the bowels of humanity. Hence it was, that the author was daily implored to procure them the protection of France, and assist them to throw off a yoke altogether unsupportable. Such has been the conduct of this phlegmatic people invariably, in all their conquests and establishments, whether in Asia, in Africa, or in America. They would monopolize the whole trade of those countries, without deserving any share of the favours of the natives; they would insinuate, cajole, flatter, and cringe, that they might rule, domineer, and play the tyrant, both tending to the same ends, self-interest, and the love of gain.

We come now to the first establishments of our own nation on the coast of Guinea; a trade here having been carried on some years by private adventurers, without the participation, aid, or protection of the government. In 1585, and 1588, queen Elizabeth granted two patents to certain rich merchants of England, one for an exclusive trade to the coast of Barbary; the other for that of Guinea, between the rivers Senegal and Gambia. In 1592,

*Natives  
besiege El-  
mina.*

*Origin and  
progress of  
the English  
Royal Afri-  
can compa-  
ny.*

<sup>k</sup> Barbot, p. 162, 163, & seq.



the same body of merchants obtained a third patent, extending their rights from the river Nogne or Nagnez, to the south of Sierra Leona. But whether this trade was discontinued on account of a deficiency of their capital stock, from an ignorance of the nature of the traffick, or that the term of their charter was expired, we are nowhere told; certain only it is, that the trade was wholly dropt, and again resumed in the sixth year of James the First, who granted a patent under the great seal to Sir Robert Rich, and other merchants of London, with an exclusive power, of more validity and extent than any of the former grants. Even this was insufficient; the new company sustained such a variety of losses, that they grew heartily tired of the commerce of Africa, and, as appears by a memorial delivered to the house of commons, were ready entirely to abandon it, unless they should obtain relief from parliament. Then it was that the Dutch began to share in the wealth from the other hemisphere, and to divide the trade with the Portuguese. Their success excited some other English merchants to represent to James the First, of what importance it was to this kingdom to preserve the African trade; a remonstrance that was followed by a patent to Nicholas Crisp, Humphrey Hamey, and company, for the sole and exclusive right of that commerce<sup>1</sup>.

In the year 1651, the same rights were confirmed to Rowland Wilson and several other merchants, by the republic of England; but during the unhappy distraction of affairs preceding this period, the Dutch and Danes had seized the opportunity of fortifying themselves on the coast of Africa; insomuch, that with the loss of their settlements, the English company had the misfortune to see their stock and capital ruined. Some private traders still however continued to frequent those coasts; but their success was no better than that of the company, they having lost ships and effects to the amount of eight hundred thousand pounds sterling. The parliament, upon some representations made by the merchants of London, resolved to address Charles the Second, upon the subject of the African trade. Accordingly in 1664, they petitioned his majesty that he would be pleased to re-establish this commerce, and, by a vigorous exertion of his power,

<sup>1</sup> Vide a pamphlet intituled, *The Importance of the African Company*, p. 10, 11. & seq.

curb the insolence of the Dutch; but the war in 1665 prevented the effects of this application <sup>m</sup>.

Charles had granted, in 1662, a charter to a body of merchants, under the name of the Royal Company of England trading to Africa, extending their limits from the mouth of the Straights to the Cape of Good Hope. This company, which was only in its infancy when the war broke out, suffered extremely from the depredations of De Ruyter, who took the castle of Cormantin and fort of Tokaray, with ships to the amount of two hundred thousand pounds. By an article in the treaty of Breda, restitution was to have been made of all the places taken by either party during the war; but the affairs of the company were so low and disordered, that they consented to surrender their charter for a sum of money; upon which the king immediately erected another corporation, called the Royal African Company, which has subsisted to this day. This charter bears date September 27, 1672, and establishes the limits of the company's exclusive privileges from Cape Sale on the south of Barbary, to the Cape of Good Hope. Although the capital this new corporation begun with was small, yet so great was their diligence and success, that in a few years the face of affairs underwent a total change; Cape Coast was enlarged and beautified. This fort was all that remained to the old Company, and purchased from them at the price of thirty-four thousand pounds. The forts of Akra, Dixcove, Winebaw, Sukkonda, Commendo, and Anamaboa, were built or repaired, all of them on the Gold Coast, several within musquet shot of the Dutch settlements. They bought Fredericksbourg of the Danes, and built a new fort in Whidah. In a word, in spite of all the murmurings, jealousies, and heart-burnings of the Dutch, they raised their commerce equal to their's, and superior to that of all other nations <sup>n</sup>.

It appeared that the Royal African Company, soon after their establishment, exported of home manufactures to the value of seven thousand pounds yearly (E); that they

<sup>m</sup> Vide Journ. H. C. sub hoc anno.      <sup>n</sup> Vide a memoire presented to the committee of the house, p. 667.

(E) The exports from England to Africa, at present, consist of anabasses, arrangos, rough amber, brags of all sorts, blankets, bays, bells, amber beads, crystal, coral and all other beads, broad cloth, boysadoes, carpets, camblets, copper of all sorts,

they abundantly supplied our American colonies with slaves at an easy rate, and often gave long credit; that they imported into England a great quantity of red wood, elephants teeth, gums, cottons and gold dust; the latter in such plenty, that from thirty to fifty thousand guineas have at once been coined from the gold imported; the impression being an elephant. Their success, however, was less considerable on the north-coast, where the Dutch West-India company possessed themselves of Fort Arguim, and the French, of St. Lewis, at the mouth of the river Senegal. In 1673, indeed, they got possession of Fort James on the river Gambia, and of a small castle at Sierra Leona; the commerce of the coast from Cape Blanco to Cape Monte becoming about this time equally open to the English, French, and Dutch. But in 1677, and the year following, the French drove the Dutch from Arguim and Goree, and since those places have been formally ceded at the treaty of Nimiguen to the French, and they have claimed an exclusive privilege from that time. They have frequently seized upon the Portuguese, Dutch, and English traders, and not only assumed a despotic government over that district, but made constant attempts to extend their limits.

forts, cotton stuffs of all kinds, worsteds, damasks, druggets, duroys, earthen ware, fringe, flint, fire steels, fuzees, musquets, carbines, blunderbusses, pistols, gun powder. Goods from the East-Indies, Bombay stuffs, calicoes, chintz, ginghams, Guinea cloths, long cloths, muslins, satins, taffaties silk, with great variety of drugs, porcelain, &c. Besides the above goods, the African company send fine hats, felt hats, handkerchiefs, hollands, iron bars, wrought iron, knives, scissars, hard ware of all sorts, lead bars, sheets, and shot, liquors, as arrack, brandy, beer, rum, malt spirits, wine, long-ells, looking-glasses, medicines, pa-  
per, padlocks, pewter, perpetuanoes or ranters. Provisions, as pickled beef, pork, butter, cheese, bread, flour, biscuits, suet, vinegar, oil, sugar, raisins, currants, spices, tobacco. Shalloons, Silesia linen, and all other German, Scotch, and Irish linen cloths, sealing wax, swords of all sorts, hangers, scymetars, cutlasses, soap, floss, tallow, slate and marble. Trimmings, as lace, buttons, gold and silver thread, mohair buttons, silk thread, buckram and tapes, ticken, striped hollands, and striped linens, Welch plains; coats, waistcoats, breeches, drawers, shifts, shoes, slippers, stockings, perukes, wool-cards, all coarse woollen cloths, &c. &c. (1).



The Revolution introduced a number of interlopers in the African trade, to the great prejudice of the company. Those adventurers diminishing the price of European commodities, and raising that of slaves, ivory, and gold dust, obliged the company to implore the aid of parliament; but a majority appeared at that time in the house for an open trade. For three years the trade was made free to all the merchants of Great Britain, upon paying to the company ten per cent. on their exports and imports, from port to port in Africa. Thenceforward, the decline of trade became sensible, and so low was it reduced in 1700, that the company, after setting forth the prejudice they had received from the encroachments of adventurers, proposed, as the only resource, to enter upon a treaty of neutrality with the French company, for all the establishments between Cape Verd and Sierra Leona°. This, however, did not take effect, and the act for laying the trade open being expired in 1712, all the remonstrances of the company to parliament did not prevent a renewal of it. Then the directors again changed their measures, and began to think, that the decline of commerce was owing rather to the warm opposition and rivalry between them and the adventurers, than to the act, which laid the trade open. In fact, this opposition only served to irritate both parties, now so highly inflamed, as to stick at no means to accomplish the ruin of each other. The company spoke of the adventurers as pirates, and treated them as such, as often as they had it in their power; while the private merchants retorted upon them, by asserting that they fattened upon the spoils of the nation, and restricted the trade, in order to raise the profits. Now at length, the company finding every other endeavour fruitless, began to chime in with their rivals, and to insinuate, that by a coalition, the profits of each might be augmented, the trade extended, and the encroachments of foreigners prevented. By means of their forts, and the facility with which they could penetrate the navigable rivers, the company in one respect maintained great advantages over their competitors. They could easily push their trade into the inland countries, and procure a variety of commodities in greater abundance, and at a lower price than their rivals. But the adventurers, on the other hand, balanced these by equivalent advantages. They fitted out shipping at less expence; they carried on

• Labat Nouvelle Relation de l'Afrique occid. vol. iv. p. 346.

the trade by correspondents, without the expence of forts, governors, factors and servants. Hence they are able to undersell the company, particularly in the slave trade, and to make three returns from the American colonies, while the others performed two voyages. All these reasons concurred in persuading the directors of the company, that their best method was to join issue with some of the most wealthy among the adventurers. In truth, they could not expect but to be losers, while the nation in general were gainers, and this it was that put it out of their power to maintain their forts and establishments. But as it was unreasonable, that they should support the expence, while the rest of the nation shared the advantages of their forts, the company, in proposing a coalition, demanded an equivalent for this. The matter was referred to the board of trade, and all the particulars examined by a special committee. The resolutions of this committee were that the trade should be free, and be exempted from all expences whatever, and that the crown be at the yearly charge of ten thousand pounds for maintaining forts. The company complained that this sum was insufficient, and made it appear from their books, that in factors, agents, repairing, interest of money, and other expences, near three times the money would be necessary to put the commerce upon a right footing. This they more fully proved by the examples of France and Holland; but notwithstanding all these measures, things remained in the situation we have mentioned till the year 1730, when some new regulations, of little consequence, were made. As we shall have occasion towards the close of our history to speak more particularly of the present state of this trade, we have here given only a general idea of the rise and progress of the three chief European companies.

*Conclusion  
of the history  
of the  
European  
settlements.*

## S E C T. II.

### *Geography of the Gold Coast.*

*Division  
of the Gold  
Coast.*

**STRETCHING** along the sea, the Gold Coast contains a variety of different kingdoms and states, viz. Adomir, called likewise Saku and Avina; Axim; Ankobar; Adom, likewise called Little Inkassan, or Warshes; Jabi or Jabs; Commendo, or Guaffo; Fetu; Sapo; Fantin; Ackron; Agonna, or Anguirra; Amra, or Aquambus; Labbadé; Ningo, or Lambi.

The

The beginning of the Gold Coast may be placed at Rio de Suiero da Costa, near Iffini, that being the first place where gold is found; and the end at Lay, in the country of Lampi, three or four leagues from Akra; because there the gold is procured but accidentally, from a people called Amaho, inhabiting the more distant interior country. Each of the above divisions, provinces, or kingdoms, have one, two, or more towns or villages on the sea-coast, between, or under the European forts and settlements. Eight of them are real monarchies, having their own proper kings, who, before the arrival of the Europeans, were called captains; the rest are republics, governed by magistrates, who are subject to the laws and periodical changes. Upon the river Ankobar, or Cobre, which is properly the first country of the Gold Coast, there are a number of towns, which compose the three different provinces of Ankobar, Aborrel or Abocro, and Eguira. The first is a monarchy, the two latter republics. For a number of years the Dutch had a fort at Eguira, and their gold trade, besides what they drew from the neighbouring countries, was very considerable; this canton having its own proper mines. During Bosman's presidency at Axim, a very rich one was discovered; but the Dutch soon lost footing in the country, by an event equally tragical in itself, and prejudicial to their interest. The Dutch governor having quarrelled with the chief of the Negrões, besieged him in his own house, where he made a brave defence. His ball being exhausted, he fired golden bullets at the Dutch, giving them at the same time to understand, that he was ready to compromise the difference, which was an artifice of his despair, to involve the enemy in his destruction. In the middle of the negociation he blew up himself and the Dutch, by an act as brave as it was desperate and unfortunate. For this purpose he had engaged a slave, by promising him new cloaths, to stand ready with a lighted match, with which he was to set fire to the train, upon a signal given. The poor wretch punctually executed his orders, and was buried in the ruins, no one escaping besides a slave belonging to the Hollanders, who suspecting the design, ran to acquaint his masters of it. By the communication between the Negroe's house and the fort, the whole was destroyed.

Eight leagues east of Cape Apollonia stands the town of Axim, which Barbot, without assigning a reason, calls

† Bosman, Epist. 11. Prevost, tom. v. livre ix. chap. 4.



Achembene. According to the ideas of power established among the Negroes, this had formerly been a great and powerful republic; but the arrival of the Brandenburgers divided the natives. One party, in expectation of an easier government and looser reins, put themselves under the protection of the new comers, while the other adhered to the Dutch. If we take a view of the country before this period, we shall find it extended six miles in length, seven says Barbot, computing from Rio Cobre to the village Bosna, a mile west of the Dutch fort, near Bourtrie. The canton of Axim produces a prodigious quantity of rice, water-melons, ananas, bananas, cocos, oranges, lemons of two different kinds, with abundance of other fruits and vegetables of all sorts. As to the maize, it is neither plentiful nor excellent, by reason of the humidity and moisture of the soil. So continual is the rain here, that, according to the proverb of the country, it rains eleven months and twenty-nine days in the year. Rice the natives export to all the kingdoms of the coast, bringing home in return millet, yams, potatoes, and palm-oil. Axim produces likewise great numbers of black cattle, sheep, goats, and tame pigeons, as well as other fowls. The whole country is filled with populous villages, some on the sea-side, others farther up the country, all of them rich and beautiful. All the intermediate lands are well cultivated, and the soil so fertile as richly to compensate the labour of the husbandman; besides which the natives are wealthy, from a constant traffick they maintain with their gold with the Europeans. This trade, however, is somewhat diminished by the long wars supported against the Negroes of Ante, or Adem, since the year 1681<sup>r</sup>.

*Description  
of the coun-  
try.*

*Achombone,  
the capital.*

Achombone, the capital, stands under the cannon of the Dutch fort; behind, it is secured by a thick wood, that covers the whole declivity of a neighbouring hill; between the town and the sea runs an even and spacious shore of beautiful white sand; all the houses are separated by groves of cocos and other fruit-trees, planted in parallel lines, each of an equal width, and forming an elegant vista. These avenues, together with the extensive prospect, render the Dutch fort here one of the pleasantest establishments in Guinea, an advantage which is greatly diminished by the humidity of the air and unhealthiness of the climate, particularly in the rainy seasons. The little river of Axim crosses the town, and the coast is defended by a

<sup>r</sup> Bosman, ubi supra.

number

number of little pointed rocks, which project from the shore, and render all access to it dangerous\*.

The government of Axim is composed of two bodies of the natives; the caboceroes, or *chief men*, and the manceroes, or *young men*. In their republics, in particular, all over the coast, the modes of administration are so perplexed and confused, that it is difficult to describe them. At Axim the cognizance of all civil affairs belongs to the caboceroes; but whatever is of general concern, and may properly be called national, equally appertains to both members of the state. Thus, making war or peace, treaties or alliances, imposing and augmenting taxes, levying or paying tributes to foreigners, are determined upon by both bodies composing the legislative power. They here form a constitution somewhat similar to a British house of peers and commons, where nothing passes into an act that has not received the assent of each. Like the commons too, the manceroes often trespass upon the bounds of authority, and transgress the political line that separates and divides the different departments of the government. Their number being greater, their property is proportionable, and this will ever imply power in all states where a spark of liberty remains; so the peers of Axim are often forced to yield their opinion to the obstinacy and weight of the commons. The caboceroes are less wealthy in gold and slaves, and of course less regarded by the people; but what sets the authority of the manceroes more conspicuously superior to the caboceroes is, that the latter are often impeached before the bar of the former; but no manceroe can be tried for crimes of a public nature but by his own assembly<sup>†</sup>.

*Government.*

Bosman describes their method of distributing justice nearly in the following terms: if one Negro of private rank hath pretensions upon another, he goes loaded with presents of gold or brandy, both of magnetic virtue here, to the caboceroes. This he delivers, then states his grievance, desires speedy redress, retires, and leaves them to deliberate rather upon the merits of his present than of his cause. If it be determined to favour the plaintiff in an extraordinary manner, a full assembly is convoked immediately, or at farthest in two or three days. Here they proceed with great solemnity to an iniquitous decision, without assigning any other reason for their verdict than the force of the received bribe, and the gratitude due on

*Civil courts.*

\* Barbot, *ibid.*

† Des Marchais, tom ii. p. 22.

that

that account to the plaintiff. If, on the contrary, the present of the defendant be the more liberal, or if the bribes be equal, and the address of the latter superior, then the sentence takes a quite different turn, and the justest cause in the world cannot procure the plaintiff redress, or even a hearing. However, when the case is too flagrant, and the merits of the plaintiff's grievance universally known, to avoid scandal, the caboceroes will decline giving sentence, and have recourse to artful evasions and procrastination: the suit will be perplexed by false glosses, or interrupted by other affairs; nay, if hard pushed, the assembly will be adjourned, and the plaintiff obliged to sit down with the loss of his bribe, his grievance, and the disappointment of his views. The suit is in this manner devolved to his heir, who, perhaps, thirty or forty years after, resumes it with more ability, and perhaps before less partial judges. Bosman adds, that he himself has in the dernier resort, or last appeal, had such causes before him, as, from their antiquity, one would be amazed how the smallest trace of evidence or vestige of resentment could be found among a people ignorant of writing, and who have no memory of past facts but by oral tradition<sup>u</sup>.

It sometimes happens, that the plaintiff, finding the sentence likely either to be tedious or unfavourable, redresses himself by seizing upon the property in gold or slaves of the aggressor. In this method of retaliating, he keeps strictly within the bounds of justice, and apprehends no bad consequences from this self-decision, provided he lives in another town or village. Here he is sure of being supported by his townsmen, and a private quarrel presently terminates in a civil broil, no other way to be appeased than by the sword, or an agreement between the original opponents. If the sentence of the caboceroes should happen to be equitable, or if the cause should be decided by the Dutch governor, the dispute is amicably concluded by adjudging according to evidence; but if neither party produces sufficient testimony by witnesses, or probable circumstances, the defendant, clearing himself by oath, is acquitted. Should he scruple to purge himself by solemn deprecation, judgment passes against him, on condition that the plaintiff corroborates his charge by oath. The oath of purgation is always preferred to that of accusation; but if the plaintiff proves his charge by two or one witness, then the purgation-oath is not permitted

<sup>u</sup> Bosman, Epist. 11.



to be taken. Hence arise numberless inconveniences, perjury being a common crime among the Negroes : besides, he who believes himself aggrieved, by subornation, never fails to watch an opportunity of revenge. Instances of this nature are, however, the most frequent in the interior and distant districts ; as all suits arising near the European forts are determined by the sentence of the factor and the caboceroes ; a judgment that is obligatory, admitting of no appeal, but to the director-general.

As to penalties in criminal cases, murder is punished either by death or a pecuniary mulct. The former is seldom executed, except when the criminal is poor, and unable to answer the demands of his judges. The latter is of two sorts with respect to freemen and slaves, the fine for murdering a slave being trifling in comparison to that exacted for the life of a free man. We shall have occasion to speak of this more explicitly under the section of general customs among the Negroes. At Axim all fines are paid into the hands of the Dutch factor, who in a manner assumes the supreme executive power. This fine he distributes to the injured person, after having first deducted his fee, which, before the presidency of Bosman, rose high, but by him was reduced. At present the factor is permitted to receive no more than eight crowns for determining the most important suit that comes before him. The only punishment for thefts is restitution, or paying a fine proportioned to the quality of the offender. In cases of debt the creditor may seize on the property of the debtor double the value of what is due to him ; but the execution of this law being deemed oppressive, the usual method is, to settle the account by arbitration, or restitution of the goods and chattels bought \*.

*Punishments inflicted in criminal cases.*

We shall now describe the European settlements in Axim, beginning with the Dutch fort of St. Anthony. This fortress stands on a high rock, which projects into the sea in form of a peninsula. It is so invironed by other dangerous shoals and blind rocks, as to be inaccessible to an enemy but by land : and there it is fortified by a parapet, draw-bridge, and battery of heavy cannon. The building is neat, strong, and commodious for the extent, which is but small, on account of the narrowness of the rock or point on which it is situated. At some distance at sea it may be taken for a large white house ; but for two miles along shore nothing can be more agreeable than the fort

*Description of the European settlements.*

\* Bosman, Epist. 12.

in perspective, the village of Achombone, the wood behind, and the multitude of rocky heights which border upon the coast. In war-time, the custom of the natives is to place their families and most valuable effects among those rocks, to secure them against the enemy. The Portuguese, who were the founders of this settlement, fixed themselves, during the reign of Emanuel, upon a small point, which they found not only inconvenient, but insecure against the attacks of an enemy: they therefore, on being hard pressed by the Dutch, built the fort where it now stands; from which they were likewise driven, in the year 1642. Upon the re-establishment of peace between Portugal and the States General, it remained by treaty in the hands of the Dutch company, who have ever since kept possession of it.

The form of Fort St. Anthony is triangular. It has three batteries, one towards the sea, and two, says Des Marchais, toward the land, in all mounting twenty-four pieces of iron cannon, besides redoubts. The gate is low, and secured by a ditch dug out of the rock, and, as we have said, a drawbridge, behind which is a platform, capable of holding, in military order, a body of twenty men. The factor's or president's house is built of brick, of a moderate height. The form is the same with that of the fort, having three fronts, each of which has an esplanade, adorned with orange trees. The garrison is usually composed of twenty-five white men and an equal number of Negroes, under the command of a serjeant. It is maintained at the expence of the West India company, and, when well furnished with stores and provisions, capable of making a long defence against any number of Negroes. However, St. Anthony fort is liable to the same inconveniences as all the other fortifications on this coast; the heavy, and continual rains damaging the walls, and rendering frequent reparation necessary. This obliges the Dutch always to keep a quantity of lime, or cement composed of calcined oyster-shells, of which the coast produces great abundance. The situation of the fort is east of the river Axim, which the Portuguese called Rio Manco; a river navigable only by canoes, but rich in gold dust, washed down by the stream from the inland countries<sup>x</sup>.

Three leagues east of Fort St. Anthony stands Mount Manfore, near which is the town of Pockeso, large and

<sup>x</sup> Ibid. etiam, Barbot, p. 156.

populous, the chief or captain of which is known by the name of John. This is probably the same person as Atkins calls John Ronny. Pockefo is an extensive handsome town, says he, the houses not inferior to those in the north and west of England, each surrounded by a grove of coco trees. It is usual with the people to assemble in the streets, to sell their coco-nuts, oranges, lemons, maize, and kanka, or a kind of pastry, in making which the women are very expert.

Mount Mansore is a situation extremely commodious for a fort, it being the first point of Cape Tres Puntas. Here it is that the Brandenburgers or Prussians have their principal factory, called Fredericsburgh. This fort is well built, strong, and beautiful, mounting forty-six pieces of ordnance upon four batteries. Bosman observes, that the cannon are too small for the importance of the settlement, and the gate so large as to give the other Europeans an opportunity of applying in derision the proverb, "Shut your gates, that the town may not run away." On the east side is a beautiful outwork, which greatly diminishes the strength of the fort; but the greatest fault in the whole building is, that the breastworks are too low, reaching no higher than the knee, whence the garrison in case of an attack would be totally exposed to the fire of the enemy.

*Fredericsburgh.*

The commander in chief of Fredericsburgh, and indeed of all the Prussian establishments in Guinea, takes the title of director-general of the Prussian African company. In Bosman's time, their commanders and servants, common soldiers excepted, were chiefly composed of Dutch, who, in imitation of that people, exerted a supreme authority over the Negroes. However, they were always unsuccessful in their endeavours to subject them; miscarriages owing chiefly to the intestine divisions among themselves, and in some measure to the obstinacy of the natives, who are tenacious of their liberty. Barbot gives us the following relation of the rise of that establishment. In 1682, the elector of Brandenburg sent two frigates to the Gold Coast, one mounting thirty-two pieces of cannon, the other eighteen guns, having on board one hundred and twenty men. The largest frigate was commanded by Matthew de Vas, the smallest by Philip Peter Blanco. They arrived in the month of May off Cape Tres Puntas, and landing at Mount Mansore, then called Mantfort,

*Account of the Prussian settlement at Fredericsburgh.*

7 Aut. citat. ubi supra.

erected



erected the standard of the electorate. Blanco, who was well acquainted with the character and custom of the natives, employed his credit with so much address, that he obtained liberty from the caboceroes to build a fort upon the mount, and to establish a regular commerce. Landing his cannon, and throwing up some slight works, he built a few houses, and left a garrison there; then he returned to Hamburgh. So well had he managed his affairs, that some of the caboceroes determined to accompany him to Europe, and they were accordingly conducted to Berlin, where the elector received them with great kindness, shewing them every thing that could excite their admiration and engage their esteem. Next year they returned, under the conduct of the same Blanco, who then built the fort, and fully established the colony.

Bosman gives us the names and characters of six successive directors<sup>2</sup>. Of these the last, John Vistor, was a person of so little conduct and prudence, that the affairs of the company began to fall into confusion and ruin. At last the Negroes, enraged against him for some acts of cruelty he had committed, seized him, broke all his limbs, and, after torturing him with the utmost barbarity, threw his body into the sea. Henceforward the affairs of the Prussians were on the decline till the year 1708, when Sir Dalby Thomas was governor of the English fort at Cape Coast. This gentleman acquainted the African company, that the king of Portugal had offered his Prussian majesty forty thousand pounds sterling for the fort; however, it was not till the year 1721 that the Brandenburgers abandoned it, the company having purchased both it and Arguim for thirty thousand pounds.

*They abandon Fredericburgh.*

According to Des Marchais, the Prussians quitted Fredericburgh in the year 1720, and put the fort into the hands of John Ronny, king of Cape Tres Puntas. This author adds, that the year following it was attacked by the Dutch, under pretence of a prior contract with the Prussians: but the Negro king replied with great courage to the commissioners sent to him, that the fort had been put into his hands, and that he would defend it with his blood; that he could not conceive any right the Dutch could claim to a fort built in his territories, and that their menaces should not deter him from defending it for the French, whose right only he chose to acknowledge. The conference being now broke off, the Dutch began the attack

<sup>2</sup> Epist. 5.

with great fury, the governor of Mina marching with a choice body to give the assault. John Ronny received him with such spirit and address, that, after the loss of one hundred and fifty-five men, they were forced to quit the siege, and embark with great precipitation, the governor and several officers being dangerously wounded. During the attack, a French ship, called the Princess of Rochefort, lay at anchor in the Road. After the Dutch were repelled, she approached the shore, and the captain in landing was civilly received by the natives, and particularly the king, who offered him the fort and his protection. A formal instrument to this purpose was drawn up; eight French, and a certain number of Negroes were appointed to garrison the place, till the captain's return from Europe with a sufficient force, and every method for establishing the right of the French nation: but all proved abortive, through the timidity of the captain. After his return on board his ship he sent orders for the eight French left in the fort to quit it, and avoid the snare laid for them by the Negroes: thus, by his suspicion and pusillanimity, robbing his country of a valuable settlement.

Des Marchais asserts, that Fredericksburgh is one of the most commodious situations on the whole coast<sup>a</sup>. The anchorage is safe, and the entrance into the harbour easy to pilots acquainted with the road. The climate is as healthy as any in Guinea, and the country rich and well cultivated. Besides the great quantity of gold found in the river, the inhabitants carry on a considerable trade in ivory and slaves, over and above the profits arising from the salt made by the women for their amusement. The government is well conducted, and the people in general, the magistrates in particular cases excepted, are possessed of the principles of humanity, industry, and justice. In a word, says he, this trade is no less pleasant than profitable; and, if the French had known their own interest, the most important colony they could have settled in Africa might have been at Fredericksburgh.

Soon after the above accident, it was taken by the Dutch, who have kept possession of it, with great advantage, to this day, and probably will continue to do so, unless circumstances occur to make them totally abandon the African trade, a resolution that can only flow from some peculiarly unhappy change in the situation of the United Provinces.

*Taken by  
the Dutch.*

<sup>a</sup> Des March. vol. ii. p. 56.

Cape Tres Puntas, of which we have made frequent mention, had its name given by the Portuguese, from its being composed of three points or eminences projecting into the sea. These points are separated by little bays, which afford good anchorage. Each of the hills is clothed with beautiful woods, which are seen a great way at sea. Upon the shore of the two bays stand three villages, Akora, Akron, and Insiamma; to which last the English give the name of Dickscove. The village of Akora is situated at the bottom of the first bay, westward; Akron, on the declivity of the middle point, and Dickscove, on a little gulf formed by the land between that point and Akron. Some voyagers affirm, that these three villages belong to Washas, a country lying between Axim and Anta. The whole of this coast is mountainous and woody; the timber most in esteem is a yellow tree, much used in chairs, tables, and household furniture. Near Akora stands the little fort Dorothea, which received considerable improvements from the diligence of the Hollanders. This building consists of one house, flat-roofed, defended by two batteries of ten guns each, and divided into a great variety of convenient apartments.

*Fort Dorothea.*

*Dickscove.*

Dickscove was rebuilt by the English in 1691, after they had long disputed the ground with the Prussians, who were at length forced to evacuate it. In the space of six years the conquerors had not completed their building; and after all, it scarce merits the name of a fortress. Bosman has often heard the English complain of the situation of this fort, as it is not only inconvenient for trade, but placed in the midst of a fraudulent, intractable, and obstinately vicious band of Negroes, with whom there is no dealing with safety. If the English have recourse to force, they are also opposed by force, and so warmly, says our author, that for five years after their establishment they were continually skirmishing with the natives, who at length laid siege to the fort, and were very near carrying it. The consequence was, that they forced the English to accept of their terms, threw off the yoke, and recovered their liberty. Hence proceeded, says the same author, an alliance so strict between them, that they jointly agreed to cheat all the ships that traded there, by passing false gold for pure, a fraud they here frequently practised.

Barbot describes this fort as standing two miles east of Dorothea. It borders on the sea, is of a quadrangular form, built of stone and cement, and its principal strength consists



consists in two bastions, mounted with twelve cannon. In 1726, it would seem to have been greatly improved; for Smith describes the fortifications as complete and regular, with four bastions, mounting twenty pieces of cannon, and gardens equally pleasant and useful <sup>b</sup>.

*Of the Countries of Anta and Tabi, with their Towns and Forts.*

THE kingdom of Hante, as the Negroes call it, or *Kingdom of Anta*, begins with the village of Boesia (1), eight miles east of Ankora. For a series of years this country was divided into the Upper and Lower Anta; Axim being reckoned the former, and that district now called Anta, composing the latter. It is bounded on the north by the country of Adom, on the north-east by Mampo, by Axim on the west, and on the south and south-east by the ocean; its extent from east to west being about ten leagues. The country is mountainous, and covered by large trees, among which stand a number of fine villages. Formerly Anta was potent and populous, inhabited by a bold and rapacious people, who greatly annoyed the Europeans, by their frequent incursions. By continual wars with Adom, and their other neighbours, they are, however, now greatly enfeebled, the country in a manner depopulated, and no vestiges remaining of their former glory. The land here is well watered, the vallies rich and extensive, producing rice in abundance, maize of the best sort, sugar-canes, yams, and potatoes, the largest on the whole coast. Bosman is of opinion, that it might easily be improved into a fine sugar-colony; an experiment, we are amazed, has not been tried with more success, or rather diligence. No finer soil is to be met with in any part of the globe than along the banks of the river of Bourtry, and the country is no less beautiful than it is rich. It affords the greatest abundance of bread, wine, oil, and animal food; but with the number of the people, the spirit of the few remaining inhabitants is fled; desponding, dispirited, and abject, they shelter themselves under the cannon of

*Description  
of Anta.*

<sup>b</sup> Bosman & Des March. *ibid*.

(1) Prevost, after Barbot, Bosna, and differs in many gives this country the above other appellatives from all the name; but Bosman calls it other writers.

the Dutch fort, leaving the greatest part of the land wild and uncultivated. It is really deplorable to view it at present, and reflect on its once flourishing condition; and perhaps a better lesson in politics and the direful effects of war cannot be given, than by a view of the changes made by ambition, and a haughty turbulent spirit in the Antefc nation, in the space of one century<sup>c</sup>. Bosman relates, that before the war that put a period to its glory, and closed the last scene of its felicity, he had an opportunity of walking to Bourtry, when it regaled the eye with numerous villages well peopled, with rich fields finely cultivated, and with every other object capable of filling the mind with pleasure, content, and admiration of the wise Author of nature. Here a soldier, who could hardly breathe on his scanty pay in other places, fared luxuriously on half his income; the labourer lived with the affluence of the gentleman, and he with the splendor of the nobleman. Besides, it is remarkably the most healthy situation on the coast, it being observed by all writers, that the number of deaths here bears no proportion to that in any other country on the coast of Guinea<sup>d</sup>.

The river that washes Bourtry, whose banks are covered with stately trees that spread an agreeable shade over the water, is navigable for four miles higher; but there it is choaked up by rocks and prodigious falls of water, which add to the beauty of the scene, though they diminish the conveniency. On both sides are seen infinite numbers of monkeys, apes, tygers, wild cats, and some elephants, as well as cows, horses, sheep, hogs, fowls, and all kind of birds. Its waters are filled with shoals of delicious fish; but the catching them is rendered dangerous by the great number of sharks and crocodiles with which the river abounds.

**Bourtry.**

The principal villages of this country are Bourtry, or Botro, Boyera or Petre Grand, Pando, Tokorari, which surpasses all the others in extent and beauty, Sokonda, Anta, and Sama, all of them deserving particular notice, on account of the commerce they drive. Botro, or Bourtry, stands upon a small river at the foot of an eminence, on which the Dutch have built an irregular and mean fort, of an oblong form, divided into two parts, each defended by four small pieces of cannon: it was built by one Carolus, in the service of the Dutch, who afterwards passed into the pay of France, and obtained that privilege from

<sup>c</sup> Bosman. Epist. 12.

<sup>d</sup> Ibid.

the king of Anta, on acknowledging his superiority by a slight tribute. This fort is called *Badenstyn*: its batteries command the village of *Bourtry*, which has no other commerce than the gold trade carried on with the Negroes of *Adom*. The inhabitants are of a mild and gentle disposition, greatly affected to the Europeans, upon whom they look as their protectors. In 1708, the Dutch began to mark out ground for forming sugar plantations, and their director-general sent to *Whidah* for two hundred slaves, who were to be employed in cultivating them. They likewise sent to Europe for all the necessary implements, and made such preparations as alarmed *sir Dalby Thomas*, the English governor at *Cape Coast*. He transmitted an account of their proceedings to his constituents, and frequently remonstrated to the *Royal African Company*, the danger of permitting the Dutch to execute a plan which would lessen the value of the British colonies in the *West Indies*. Whether the intrigues of the company, or some other cause, might be the occasion, we know not; but those sugar plantations never answered the great expectations of the Dutch.

The king of *Anta* has fixed his residence four miles from the Dutch fort, choosing to live near the Europeans, as even now he is seldom freed from his apprehensions from the incursions of the *Adomese*.\*

*Boyera* and *Pandos*, two villages lying between *Bourtry* and *Tokorari*, are wholly inhabited by fishermen and labourers, who drive a considerable trade with their neighbours, exchanging the fruits of the earth and fish for the produce of other countries. Those two villages are known at sea, by a large pointed rock lying before the coast. *Tokorari*, or as the English call it, *Tokorado*, is the chief village on the coast. Its situation is on a hill, advancing into the sea at south-east, surrounded by a number of rocks, some below, and some above the surface of the water, for two miles along the shore. These rocks are extremely remarkable, on account of the prodigious waves that dash against them, which probably inspired the Negroes with the notion of praying to them as divinities; fear, according to the maxim of *Lucretius*, rendering them susceptible of the sentiments of piety and devotion. The town, which is discovered behind these rocks, yields nothing in point of beauty, wealth, and extent, to *Bourtry*. Around it are plains and delicious vallies, adorned

*Boyera and Pandos.*

*Tokorari.*

\* *Barbot, ubi supra.*



with large trees and thick groves, and at every yard's distance are seen the footsteps of different animals on the white sand. The Dutch had formerly a fort, called Witsen, hard by Tokorari, which the English, commanded by captain Holmes, took from them. De Ruyter retook it the following year, and, after putting the garrison to the sword, levelled it to the ground, as a place of little consequence. Still the ruins of the fort are to be seen, after having successively passed through the hands of the Portuguese, Danes, Prussians, Dutch, and English; and some French writers allege, that it owed its origin to certain merchants of Normandy; but on the most minute enquiry, Barbot declares that assertion to be false and groundless<sup>1</sup>.

*The natives famous for building canoes.*

The inhabitants of Tokorari have the reputation of making the best canoes in Guinea. One of them shall be thirty feet long and eight broad, composed of one piece of wood, and dug out of the trunk of a single tree. The European ships who frequent the coast of Whidah, and trade to Ardrah, usually load and unload by means of those canoes; and their value may be judged of by the price they are usually sold for, which is never less than forty or fifty pounds sterling. Such is the opinion Europeans entertain of the dishonesty of the inhabitants of Tokorari, that no commerce is carried on with them, except for their canoes; besides, the coast affords but unsafe and bad anchorage. Bosman relates, that in the wars between Anta and Adom, this village was destroyed, so that, in his time, it consisted of a few houses only. Since that period it would seem to have been rebuilt, as subsequent writers speak of it as a large and populous place.

*Sukonda.*

Sukonda stands on the opposite side of the same bay. This is a rich and pleasant village, much noted for the clemency and healthfulness of the air. It stands about six miles distance from Bourtry; and before the wars of which we have spoken, was reputed the finest village on the whole coast. It however shared the fate of all the other places in Anta; its inhabitants were dispersed, its houses demolished, and a number of years ensued before it was restored to its former flourishing condition. The country for eight or ten miles round is not inferior in any particular to those we have described. The vallies are beautiful beyond imagination; and here, says Bosman, nature seems to have exerted all her skill, and poured forth her richest treasures. Formerly the French had an

<sup>1</sup> Barbot, p. 92.

establishment here; at present the English and Dutch are the only Europeans who maintain forts at Sukonda. The Dutch fort, called Orange Fort, was built in the year 1682; the English fort a few years before, but the exact date is not known. They are nearly of the same model, and situated at the distance of a musquet-shot from each other. In the year 1694 the Dutch fort was surprised and pillaged by the Negroes, who massacred in it a whole ship's crew, that had unfortunately put into the road. Four years after the English fort met with the same fate, and was rebuilt the year after by Mr. Nourse, the English factor, whose name is still inscribed on the wall. Phillips, who relates this transaction, speaks of it as a mean and trifling fortification. In the year 1699 it was, according to him, no more than a plain house in the middle of a court, defended by eight or ten cannon. For five or six years after this the commerce of the Europeans at Sukonda was on the decline, owing to the mutual jealousies of the English and Dutch, and a rivalry that was prejudicial to the interests of all parties. Their animosities, indeed, had birth prior to the taking of either fort by the natives, and this it was that encouraged them to the attempt. When the Negroes formed their design upon the English fort, they came in two bodies from Elmina, one in a large canoe, the other by land. They approached the fort under pretence of demanding an old debt; and the English, after being made acquainted with their complaint, referred them to the Dutch governor. Although the Hollander was perfectly informed of the design of the Negroes, he affected a profound ignorance and disbelief of their intentions, notwithstanding the repeated remonstrances of the English. After they had been driven from the fort, they were hard pressed in their flight by a party of the enemy in their rear, upon which they requested the protection of a Dutch ship that lay in the road; but the captain's answer was, "Do you imagine that we take any concern in your misfortunes?" An answer perfectly suitable to the character of a Dutchman and a barbarian. The English replied that they must then perish. "Perish then," said the Hollander, "and God have mercy on your souls." Hence there remains no doubt but the Dutch were deeply concerned in the plot, and other reasons appeared to confirm the suspicion, that they had no small dividend of the plunder<sup>k</sup>.

*The English and Dutch have each a fort at Sukonda.*

*Brutality of the Dutch.*

\* Barbot & Phil. ubi supra.

Description  
of the  
English  
fort.

In the year 1700 there remained only the walls of the English fort; but though the Dutch possessed the whole trade, they drew little advantage from it, because the continual efforts of the English to restore themselves greatly disturbed their operations. At last a re-establishment was effected, and a new fort rose out of the ashes of the old, with more splendor and strength than the former. Smith, who had been there in the year 1726, represents it as larger and better fortified than Dickscove. The form is quadrangular, upon an eminence, says Barbot, about fifty paces from the sea, between two Dutch forts; that at Tokorari on the west, and Sama on the east. It is built of brick, and mounted with several pieces of cannon, the garrison consisting of five white and twenty black men. As for the harbour and pier, the gardens and other particulars, they are in every respect equal to those of Dickscove. One advantage the Europeans at Sukonda enjoy peculiar to this situation; it is, that the forts standing so near, the factors of both nations have constant opportunities of each other's company when they happen to live in friendship and harmony; an advantage of inestimable value to rational and social beings placed in this barbarous and ignorant country.

As to the villages of Anta and Boari, their commerce is but accidental. They are situated between Sukonda and Sama; the country behind being woody and mountainous. The former is of some note for its palm wine, which the merchants buy up there, and sell to all the countries on the Gold Coast. This makes a chief branch of their trade at the stated periods of their vintages. The soil produces abundance of roots, fruits, pulse, goats, and fowls. It is remarkable that the natives of this country are ever harrassed with a canine hunger, a boulimy, or *insatiable appetite*; arising, as some imagine, from the liberal use of krisca, a kind of wine common in this place. Their gold comes from Mampa and Eguira, but only with the permission of the Adomese, and on paying a high duty; those Negroes drawing a large revenue from the power they have of blocking up the channels of this trade. At the village of Aboari the Dutch had formerly a small factory, but the profits were so trifling, that they removed it to Sama, a large and populous village, where however the inhabitants are extremely poor<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Bosn. Epist. 13.



Sama stands on an eminence, the fort of which is wa- *Sama.*  
 tered by the pleasant river of St. George, that discharges  
 itself into the sea. The town contains above two hundred  
 houses, which seem to form three distinct villages, one of  
 which is immediately under the cannon of the Dutch fort  
 St. Sebastian. Des Marchais deems this town to be one  
 of the largest on the whole coast, Barbot, likewise, agree-  
 ing with him in its situation, extent, and number of in-  
 habitants. The sole employment of the natives is fishing,  
 a circumstance which easily accounts for their poverty.  
 The government of this place is republican, the magistrates  
 having the supreme power, being subject to periodical  
 changes, and under the authority of the king of Gavi, who  
 seldom, however, interferes in the affairs of the state.  
 This prince resides some leagues distant from the sea, is  
 rich, and much respected by his neighbours<sup>a</sup>.

Here the Dutch fort is built upon much the same plan *A Dutch  
 fort here.*  
 as that at Bourtry. During the wars between England  
 and Holland, the English joining the Negroes of Jabi,  
 made frequent attempts on Fort St. Sebastian, but could  
 never succeed farther than in damaging the fortifications;  
 without being able to seize it, the Dutch keeping posses-  
 sion in spite of all their endeavours. Barbot says, that  
 the apartments are convenient, and the situation for trade  
 exceedingly favourable, the Negroes of Adom and Worchas  
 carrying on a constant traffick in gold, which they exchange  
 for European commodities. The Dutch maintain a great  
 authority over the natives, notwithstanding they pay an  
 annual tribute to the king of Gavi. The river of Sama  
 was by the Portuguese called Rio de St. Juan, but the  
 natives call it Bosum Pra, which signifies *God*, or the *Di-*  
*vinity*, agreeably to which they worship it. They affirm,  
 that its source lies four hundred miles up the country;  
 and Barbot agrees with them. The entrance is commo-  
 dious for shipping, who have nothing to fear besides a flat  
 rock, which the sailors call the Sugar-cake. Des Mar-  
 chais alleges, that the Dutch having resolved, if possible,  
 to discover the mines whence the Negroes brought their  
 gold, they fitted out a yawl with six men, to proceed up  
 the river to its source. After they had been gone six days,  
 and had rowed with great difficulty against a rapid stream  
 for sixty miles, they found their labour was lost, and that  
 the passage was choked up by rocks, shoals, and cata-  
 racts; which obliged them to return<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>a</sup> Des Marchais, Bosman, ubi supra.

<sup>a</sup> Barbot, p. 156.

*Produce  
of the coun-  
try round  
Sama.*

Sama is supplied with roots, fruits, and other vegetables, by the little territory of Jaben on the east, it standing at so small a distance, that most geographers have mistaken it for part of its district. A little farther east lies the country of Jabi, or Jabbah, which extends quite to Commendo. The king of this country is so poor, that Bosman advised the European merchants not to trust him with goods to the value of ten pounds sterling, and this from no distrust of his will, but of his ability to pay. He adds, however, that the fertility of the soil would soon enrich the inhabitants if they were not exposed to the continual inroads of their neighbours, who spoil and destroy what they are not able to carry away. Here the village Abrobi alone deserves mention. It is situated upon a bay, with a large plain behind, that stretches to the foot of some high mountains. Very little pure gold is to be found here, the natives being as well skilled in adulterating it as any other people in Guinea. To conclude this head, the Chamescian river, or Rio de St. Juan is so useful to the Hollanders, that, without it, Bosman says, it would be difficult to keep possession of the fort. By means of it they are supplied with wood and water; the kitchens and ovens have not only their fuel from thence, but materials for canoes and small shipping are procured by means of the river. In short, it is the chief channel both of commerce and of the conveniencies of life.

*Abrobi.*

### *Description of the Kingdom of Commendo.*

*Kingdom of  
Commendo.*

THIS country, which by voyagers is called Commendo, Commany, Komany, Aguesto, and Guaffo, is bordered on the west by the countries of Jabi and Jaben, on the north-west by Adom, by Ambranbo on the north, on the east by a little republic lying between Commendo and Fetu, called Addena or Elmina, and by the ocean on the south. Its dimensions are about five miles along the sea coast, and about as much up the country. In the center, on the strand, stands Little Commendo, or Commany, by the Negroes called Ekki Tekki, having Cape Aldea das Terras on the west, and Ampani on the east, with some little hamlets lying in the intermediate space. Commendo had formerly been a part of Sabu and Fetu, but of late years erected into a separate and distinct monarchy. The chief city, or residence of the king, is called Guaffo. It

is well inhabited and large, containing no less than four hundred houses. The situation is upon a high ground, at the distance of four miles from Little Commendo; the Dutch distinguish both by the names of Great and Little Commendo. This kingdom produces but little rice, yet are the vallies no less fertile than agreeable, and the hills covered with wood, which affords the most delightful prospect. Behind Little Commendo, the land rises by a gentle ascent into little hills, beautifully clothed with woods of a perpetual verdure, and at the bottom are meadows and plains disposed in the most agreeable manner, and filled with fruit-trees of various kinds. The natives are of a warlike disposition, and so numerous, that in this little kingdom his majesty is able to raise an army of twenty thousand men. His ordinary body guard is composed of five hundred stout fellows, well armed, resolute, and loyal. Most writers are persuaded that Commendo abounds in gold mines, but that the king, for fear of exciting the avarice of the Europeans, prohibits their being worked. Barbot relates, that near Cape Aldea some of the natives had discovered a rich mine, which the policy of the council, to guard against the consequences, and prevent its being opened, immediately consecrated into a divinity.

*Produce of the country.*

*Disposition of the people.*

As this country is divided into two distinct provinces, we shall begin with describing Little Commendo. This province, says Artus, is by the Portuguese called Aldea das Terras, and by the natives Ekki Tekki. Villault says, that this town contains at least one hundred houses. It stands upon the banks of a fine rivulet, that empties itself into the sea on the southward, which forms a kind of canal, or little oblong harbour for canoes. The north-east side of the town, where the French had formerly a settlement, is bordered by little hills, at the foot of which lie fine rich meadows and pasture, as well as fertile fields, every where interspersed with groves of fruit-trees. Little Commendo had once been a place of great note, and one of the finest towns in Guinea. At present it exhibits only the remains of a town destroyed by fire, and the well peopled ruins of a once flourishing and great city. Such it was in the year 1675, when most of the inhabitants, who were burnt out of their houses, retired to Ampeni.

Here the natives are in general turbulent, cunning, and deceitful, much addicted to lying and stealing. Their employment consists either in fishing or in commerce, and

*Little Commendo.*



their neighbours employ them as brokers and factors, particularly the people of Akamen, who drive a considerable trade. Every morning seventy or eighty large canoes may be seen upon the coast, fishing or trading with the European shipping in the road. About the middle of the day they put to shore, when the south-west winds begin to blow, both for facility of unloading, and for securing a market for their cargoes, either at Great or Little Commendo, where the inland Negroes assemble with the commodities of their several countries. No markets on earth are better supplied with all sorts of grain, roots, fruits, pulse, and fish, than these, nor at a more reasonable price <sup>a</sup>.

*English  
fort.*

Here the English and Dutch have forts. According to Barbot, the English fort is a regular spacious square, with bastions at each angle, the whole mounted with twenty-four pieces of iron cannon. The fort is well-supplied with water, and guarded by a body of sixty men, including Negroes. Smith affirms, that next to Cape Coast, this is the principal fortification the English have in Guinea, at least on the Gold Coast. The Dutch fort of Wedenborough is but a musquet-shot distant, but the advantages arising from so near a vicinity are destroyed by the quarrels and jealousies between the factors of both nations.

*Dutch fort  
called We-  
denborough.*

*Siege of  
Weden-  
borough.*

Wedenborough, the Dutch fort, was built in the year 1688, by Swerts, at that time director general. The building is a square, defended by good batteries, capable of mounting thirty-two pieces of ordnance, if complete. In 1695, the Negroes attacked it in the night, and at a time when twenty out of the small garrison, commanded by Bosman, were laid up with sickness. However, after an engagement of five hours, they were repulsed with considerable loss. Although the Negroes poured showers of shot into the embrasures, which could not be shut close, yet so bad marksmen were they, that Bosman lost but two men. Not discouraged, they returned a second time to the charge, resolving to push their way sword in hand. Bosman had sent for relief to Elmina, and a seasonable reinforcement arrived, just as the Negroes were cutting down the port-holes with their swords. An obstinate engagement ensued between this detachment, endeavouring to force their way to the fort, and the Negroes determined to oppose them. After a warm conflict, which lasted half an hour, the Dutch were overpowered and defeated; however, a considerable number found means to enter the fort.

<sup>a</sup> Bosman, *ibid*.

By this supply the spirits of the garrison were raised, and the Negroes discouraged from prosecuting the siege. Bosman relates, that his gunner had the treachery to nail up his cannon; a piece of villainy that was nearly attended with the loss of the fort. When the siege was raised, the delinquent was sent in irons to Elmina, to be punished according to his deserts, instead of which, he was not only set at liberty by the director-general, but promoted to a place of more trust and profit than he had before enjoyed<sup>r</sup>.

The principal commodities for which there is a demand by the Negroes of Commendo, are glass beads, brass bells, and buttons, long linen cloths, and woollen stuffs. The former they send up the country in exchange for gold; the latter they keep for their own consumption; however, those articles are sold only by retail, and such a variety of factors, brokers, and agents, are employed by those Negroes, as makes trading with them equally tedious and uncertain. When they are at war with neighbouring nations, trading thither for slaves is profitable, for they hurry to dispose of their prisoners to save the expence of maintaining them. A vessel arriving upon such an occasion is sure of completing her cargo in a few days. Barbot complains, that the adulteration of gold here is commonly practised, and with great address. The worst gold is that called akra or kraka, but this fraud is not of late invention, for Artus observes, that in his time, the people of Commendo were infamous for this scandalous custom. After having melted it with copper, they cut the mass into small pieces, the better to disguise the mixture. Nay they have even had the effrontery to offer the Dutch copper instead of gold<sup>s</sup>.

When the people of Commendo are at war, they usually have a slave market at Little Commendo, for the more quick dispatch. Here too they keep quantities of gold in the hands of certain agents, employed to carry on trade, while the rest are fighting the enemy in the field. The gold trade indeed is not very considerable, though the Negroes shew the ruins of a Norman factory, established solely for the gold traffick. The French build much upon this old factory; and a late writer of that nation asserts, that had they chosen it, they might have retained the exclusive commerce of Commendo to this day. His arguments are founded upon a traditional story, that one of the kings, hearing that a French ship was arrived in the road, sent

*Commodities.*

*Adulteration of gold.*

*An old French fort at Commendo.*

<sup>r</sup> Bosm. Epist 4.

<sup>s</sup> Barbot, p. 268.

*Scheme of  
Barbot.*

refreshments on board, and ordered the messenger to acquaint the captain with his resolution never to trade with any other Europeans, as long as the French favoured him with their custom. Barbot relates, that the natives to this day express a peculiar regard for the French. On his second voyage, in the year 1682, the king sent his son on board, as a pledge for his, the captain's return, if he came to Commendo to settle a treaty of commerce between the two nations, although at that time he denied the English and Dutch the liberty of erecting forts. Barbot, after his return, proposed this treaty to the minister, and mentioned the district of Ampeni, as the most commodious for a fort. His remonstrances were, however, disregarded. In the year 1688, Du Casse arrived on that coast with a squadron of four men of war, equipped at Rochefort, with intention of forming some settlements at Commendo, where the natives were proposing to throw off the yoke imposed upon them by the Hollanders. Here he actually erected a factory, in which he left a small garrison, and then sailed to Alampi and Whidah, with the same intention. A few months after Du Casse's departure from Commendo, the intrigues of the Dutch kindled a war amongst the Negroes, in which their king was killed, and the new-founded French settlement pillaged; the garrison being forced to screen themselves under the protection of the English, at Cape Coast. After this disgrace, the enterprize was never again resumed.

*Lari,*

A little to the east of this fort stands a village, called Terra Piguena, or Lari. It belonged to the Dutch, but the commerce carried on was inconsiderable, on account of its vicinity to Elmina, which engrossed all the capital branches of trade. When the Portuguese desire to trade, they send some of their natives to Tekki Ekki, or to Commendo, with gold dust to be sold to the Dutch.

*Cause of the  
war with  
the Dutch.*

The kingdom of Commendo was in the most flourishing condition, when the arbitrary and haughty conduct of the Dutch obliged the natives to arm in defence of their liberty, and to rescue themselves out of the jaws of destruction. Hostilities were however for a while suspended by the good offices and interposition of the king's brother, then in the service of the Dutch governor of Elmina; but this useful mediator having been dismissed and affronted, the Commendians only wanted a fair opportunity of declaring themselves, and coming to an open rupture. In 1694, the go-

† Idem ibid.

u Bosman, Epist. 4.



vernor of Elmina, having had miners sent him from Europe, began to make some trials of their skill upon a little hill, two miles distant from Wedenborough; the natives were highly enraged, because that eminence happened to be one of their divinities. They attacked the miners, seized upon all their utensils, and made prisoners of those whose want of address or activity prevented their escape. Of this insult the Dutch complained to the king, but he declined giving satisfaction, by protesting his innocence and ignorance of the fact. Being strongly urged to punish the offender, he laid the whole blame upon John Kabes, who resided near fort Wedenborough, and carried on a considerable traffick with the Dutch. The governor of Elmina, upon the king's declaration, marched some troops into the territory of Commendo, under the pretext of obliging Kabes to make satisfaction. Upon the first report of their arrival, Kabes came out of his village to justify himself, and to offer them presents; but finding that they proceeded to ravage and lay waste the country, he prepared for his defence. He assembled a body of troops, met the Dutch, and a sharp action ensued, in which both sides lost a number of men. This event flung the affairs of the whole country into confusion. Kabes, to be revenged on the Dutch, invited the English to settle in Commendo, or its neighbourhood. He even offered them a residence in his own town, and promised in a short time to enable them to rebuild the ruins of an old fort they had formerly possessed. Bosman says they set to work on the fort, with such diligence, as in a few weeks to make it habitable, and so strong as to render dispossessing them difficult.

*Hostilities begun between the Dutch and Commendians.*

It is defended by four batteries, and a strong tower mounted with cannon, which might greatly annoy the Dutch. Bosman asserts, that the Dutch company complained grievously of this establishment, and impeached the indolence, the ignorance, and the cowardice of the governor of Elmina, for so easily permitting it to be erected. His conduct to Kabes was likewise taxed as highly impolitic; but the governor flattered himself with the same honour as Swerts, another Dutch governor, had acquired. This man, after the king's death, had obtained by his address an absolute power over the natives of Commendo, and the present governor expected the same success. To repair his former errors, he had the precaution to engage for the

*Misconduct of the Dutch governor.*

*Commendians defeat the Dutch in several battles.*

*The bravery of the king of Commendo.*

sum of five thousand pounds, an army of Negroes in the service of the company. This body was formed out of the inhabitants of Jaffer and Kabestere, and powerful enough to reduce both the king of Commendo and Kabes, had not the governor been so imprudent as to declare, that after chastising them, he would turn his arms against the Negroes of Fantin and Sabu. From absolute necessity, those kingdoms were obliged to join the Commendians. They formed a body so powerful, that, after frequently defeating the Dutch and their allies, they rendered them incapable of attempting new enterprizes; but divisions soon arose among the conquerors, that quickly stopped this rapid course of victory. Tekki Ancan, brother to the king of Commendo, unmindful of his duty to his country, king, and engagements, went over to the Dutch, with the Negroes of Adom, and some other auxiliaries. An incident so unforeseen, put the Dutch in a condition to venture another battle, where the issue remained a long while in suspense. At length victory so far declared itself for the Dutch, that their troops began to neglect every other care for the business of plundering the enemy's camp. This circumstance, the king of Commendo, one of the bravest princes of his age, observed, and determined to profit by their error. He rallied his men, and gave orders they should march up to the enemy with their musquets shouldered, to deceive them into a belief of their being a body of allies, come to share in the booty. The stratagem succeeded to his wish; he attacked the enemy with the utmost vigour, easily drove them out of the camp, made prodigious slaughter among them, and obtained a most complete victory. Bosman charges the whole of this loss upon the misconduct of the Dutch governor, first in imprudently irritating two powerful nations, and next in permitting his troops to desert the victory in their hands, in quest of plunder \*.

*The Dutch offer terms of peace.*

The next governor who succeeded, resolved to pursue other measures. Having nothing to hope for by force of arms, he tried the effects of negotiations and treaties. He proposed to the king of Commendo a perpetual alliance offensive and defensive, on the sole condition of being indemnified for the losses occasioned by the war. The English, who could expect no advantages from this reconciliation, represented to the king, that as he had not occasioned the war, it was unreasonable he should sustain the

\* Barbot, p. 268.

expence. They added, that now it was in the king's power to impose his own terms, and that the English were ready to assist him with all their forces, in doing himself justice. The king, won by proposals which equally flattered his resentment and his interest, recommenced hostilities. The Dutch continued for some time to bear those injuries with patience, hoping to overcome the king's passion by gentleness and moderation; but perceiving that every day produced fresh outrages, they had recourse to the Negroes of Fantin, engaging them by a subsidy to remain neutral. Thus those barbarians were engaged by both sides; from the one they received a sum of money for fighting, and from the other, a larger sum for remaining neuter. The last they chose, as most for their interest and agreeable to their inclinations; nay, by raising the subsidy to three hundred pounds sterling, they engaged to declare war against their former allies, and to assist the Dutch with all their forces. While the governor of Elmina was indulging himself with great hopes from this new alliance, he had the mortification to see all his views destroyed, by a counter-mine of the English governor at Cape Coast, who offered the same sum to the Fantynese, if they would remain neuter. This they embraced for the same reasons for which they accepted the first offer of the Dutch. Their chief was the only man among them, disposed to perform his engagements with the Hollanders. Him therefore they deposed in a solemn assembly, and in his room substituted a prince more ready to comply with the humours of the people. The Commendians still continuing their insults, obliged the Dutch to apply to the Adomese, on the one side, and to the Negroes of Akani and Kabeshore on the other, promising each the sum of five hundred pounds for their aid against the Commendians. The effects of these treaties appeared infallible; but the division of the subsidy had occasioned civil wars among the new allies, and so embroiled their affairs, as rendered it impossible for them to serve the Dutch. Instead of reproaching their treachery, the governor of Elmina turned to the Negroes of Dinkira, whom he endeavoured to gain heartily into his cause, by a sum of eight hundred pounds sterling. This they accepted, and were preparing to take the field, when an incursion of some neighbouring nations into their territory, obliged them to employ their troops in their own defence. However, they had so much honour as to return the subsidy, deducting only a part for the expences of ambassadors; an example that was by no means followed by the Fantynese,

*The Dutch disappointed by all their allies.*



nese, who thought of nothing less than restitution. In this desperate state of their affairs, there remained no alternative besides ruin, or in the humblest manner supplicating peace; but a fortunate incident gave a happy turn to affairs, and an opportunity of extricating themselves with more honour. The brother of the king of Commendo, who had deserted to them in the beginning of the war, had, upon some misdemeanour, been banished with all his family to Surinam. His banishment coming to the ears of the directors of the company, was by them thought too rigorous, and accordingly revoked. The prince was set at liberty, brought back to Elmina, and employed to bring the king his brother to hearken to reasonable propositions of peace. In this business he acquitted himself with so much address, that he soon disposed the king to listen to certain terms, in consequence of which, a peace was concluded every way honourable and advantageous to the Dutch <sup>y</sup>. We are shocked at the thought of relating the sequel. The English at Cape Coast, disgusted with the king's conduct, caused him to be assassinated at a feast to which they invited him; a sad recompence for the faithful services this brave prince had done them; and an action, that will stain with ignominy the memory of that unworthy governor, whose name we chuse to pass over in silence (L).

*A treacherous action of the English.*

*The Commendians resent the murder of their king.*

An action so barbarous and insidious, threw the country into new troubles <sup>z</sup>. The Commendians were seized with the strongest resentment against the English, and entertained the most bitter notions of revenge, for the death of their brave king. On the other hand, Tekki Ankan, the king's brother, who had connived at the murder, secretly quitted Elmina to join the English, and with them to fight against his country. They proposed to the Dutch an union against the Commendians, and pointed this out as the favourable opportunity of revenging the injuries they had suffered in the late war; but the governor of Elmina shut his ears against every proposition tending to involve him in fresh quarrels, so ruinous to trade and commerce. Tekki Ankan and the English then looked out for other alliances; they engaged several little states in their cause,

<sup>y</sup> Idem ibid. Bosman, Epist. 4.

<sup>z</sup> Barbot ibid.

(L) We have it from the best authority, that the head of this unfortunate king is to this day preserved in a casket at Cape

Coast, which the Negroes are desirous of purchasing at any price.

and assembled an army greatly superior to the Commendians. The issue of the first battle was agreeable to justice; the English were defeated, and a complete victory obtained by the Commendians, owing chiefly to the conduct of their leader Tekki Ami, who signalized himself greatly in the action, and gained the reputation of being as brave and skilful a commander as their late king. *The English defeated.*

Although the Dutch had embraced a strict neutrality, the Commendian general paid them the compliment of sending to Elmina a great number of the enemies heads, testifying by this attention, that he was resolved to live and die in the service of the Hollanders. The compliment was well received, and the ambassadors returned loaded with presents. A fairer occasion, says Bosman, could never offer of revenging themselves upon the English, had they heartily espoused the cause of the Commendians; but the Dutch governor was influenced against the national interest by a favourite Negro, called Azim, a mortal enemy to the Commendians. This man never desisted from exciting his ambition, by proposing the conquest of Commendo, as a just reparation of the losses the company had sustained under the preceding governor. His arguments had such weight with this weak agent of the Dutch, that without consulting his council, he determined to attack the Negroes of Fetu, a nation subject to the Commendians. All the rights of nations were violated to gratify his ambition and favourite slave. He began hostilities upon a market-day, when the Fetuans were bringing their goods to Elmina, under the sanction of public faith and solemn treaties. In a word, as if the Dutch governor were determined to equal in treachery the English at Cape Coast, he attacked and pillaged, without honour, remorse, or conscience, those industrious and inoffensive Negroes. Many of them were killed on the spot, and twenty-four prisoners carried into Elmina, put on board a ship in the road, and sent into perpetual slavery. The pretext for so shocking a violation of public faith, was the murder of certain women of Elmina, whom the Dutch asserted were massacred under the walls of the fort by the Fetuans. The allegation was false; and had it been true, none but a base mind could have stooped to so mean and treacherous a revenge. Those women were put to death by Tekki Ankan, and the council of Mina were so sensible of the share their governor and his favourite Azim had in it, that they chose to drop the in-

*A villainous action of the Dutch governor.*

quiry, which they knew must terminate to their dishonour<sup>b</sup>.

*The Dutch trade on the decline.*

By this detestable and unwarrantable conduct, the Dutch trade at Elmina was ruined at one stroke, and the Commendians and Fetuans became the irreconcilable foes of Holland and the Dutch company. On the other hand, the English had strengthened themselves by new alliances, and believed the opportunity favourable for renewing the war with the Commendians. They attacked them with an army greatly superior in number; but the superior courage of the Commendians would have gained them a decisive victory, had not their brave general received a mortal wound, just when the scale of fortune was weighing down in their favour. This unlucky accident dispirited the troops, and made them fall into confusion; for Tekki Amo was the soul and vital principle of his army. The English pushed the advantage; and the loss of one man made fortune change sides, and declare against the Commendians. They were routed with great slaughter; a prodigious number of prisoners were taken; which, with the booty, more than indemnified the English for the expence of the whole war. In consequence of this victory, Tekki Ankan mounted the throne of Commendo; a change of government greatly to the advantage of both the English and Dutch; though they might, had other measures been at first pursued, have hoped for advantages still more considerable and important. Bosman has concealed from us the names of all the Dutch governors, whose false system of politics brought upon the company all the losses of the Commendian war. He excuses, or rather palliates, the conduct of the last governor; by transferring the blame to Azim, who had all his confidence; and seemingly with great reason, as he had done him the most essential services, before he arrived at the government of affairs<sup>c</sup>.

*The English defeat the Commendians, and kill their king.*

*Peace established.*

#### *Description of the Kingdom of Fetu.*

*Geography of the kingdom of Fetu.*

THIS kingdom, which Barbot calls Fetu, has the name of Afuto by Vasconcelos, and by most English writers is called Fetou. The first orthography we have retained, as nearest the sound and expression of the word

<sup>b</sup> Des March. p. 236. vol. i. Barbot, *ibid.* Bosman, *ubi supra*.

<sup>c</sup> Bosman *ubi sup.*



by the natives. It is bounded on the west by the river Benja, and kingdom of Commendo; on the north by the country of Ati, on the east by Sabu, and by the ocean on the south. The king who reigned in Barbot's time, was called Aken Penin Ashrive. The crown is elective, and the capital, also called Fetu, stands in the inland country. Bosman gives this kingdom one hundred and sixty miles in length, and near as much in breadth. He describes it as beginning at mount St. Jago, or the river Sel, and terminating at mount Mansro, or Montfort<sup>c</sup>.

The kingdom of Fetu had once been so powerful as to inspire with terror all the neighbouring nations, and render Commendo tributary; now the scene is reversed, the civil divisions among the inhabitants reducing it so low, that neither the king or nobility dare take a step without leave from the king of Commendo. During the Commendian war, the Fetuans were divided, one party joining with the Dutch, the other with the king of Commendo. Hence they contributed to their own ruin; neighbour fought against neighbour; they were cut down on all sides, and in the last battle almost totally destroyed. At present the inhabitants are scarce sufficient to cultivate the country, which is fertile and pleasant as any upon the coast. Before those wars, Bosman, who had often traversed it, says that it was filled with populous villages, the country every where exhibiting marks of wealth and plenty. Grain, cattle, oil and palm wine, constituted its principal riches: but what rendered it unspeakably pleasant and beautiful, were the groves that shaded all the roads, by which the passenger was equally defended against the rain, and the scorching beams of the sun. One of the finest in the whole kingdom was that from Elmina to Sambu, a village near the capital. It is extremely well situated for European settlements, by reason of the neighbouring trading kingdoms, and the conveniency and cheapness of living. The natives were busied in tilling the ground, sowing the seed, planting trees, making oil, or drawing wine from the palm, with which the kingdom abounded. Some also were employed in fishing, in making salt, in driving a trade upon their own capitals, or as brokers for the merchants of the inland countries<sup>d</sup>.

Three miles below Wedenborough stands the town and fort of La Mina, or St. George Elmina, a name given it.

Prevost, tom. v. lib. ix. cap. 4. <sup>d</sup> Barbot, p. 142. Smith, p. 139.

*Description  
of the  
Dutch fort  
at La Mi-  
na or El-  
mina.  
Town of  
Elmina,  
its former  
wealth and  
power.*

by the Portuguese; but for what reason cannot so clearly be determined, as no part of the country affords mines of any kind. Bosman thinks it probable that the name arose from the great abundance of gold sent hither from the interior country. The town is by the natives called Oddena, though the Europeans in general retain the appellation first imposed by the Portuguese; it is of a great length, but narrow: the houses are built of a stone hewn out of a neighbouring rock. In the year 1684, this town was so populous, so powerful, and the inhabitants so brave, that they were the terror of the whole coast. Under the conduct of a good officer, they were, according to Bosman, capable of the greatest undertakings; since that period, the small pox first made terrible havock among them, afterwards the tyrannical government and wars of Commendo concluded the devastation begun by that nauseous and filthy disease. So depopulated, impoverished, and miserable is the place, that one finds it difficult to credit the best authorities concerning its former opulence, and that a change so sad should be produced in so short a time. It is not able to raise above fifty men, exclusive of the servants of the factory, fit to bear arms. Hardly a town on the whole coast but has profited by the calamities of Oddena. They have grown populous by its becoming a desert; and the tyranny of the governors of Elmina, the dread of the small-pox, and the Commendian war, have all been so many advantages to Akim and other places, which have furnished an asylum to the miserable inhabitants of Oddena. When Bosman first arrived there, not a morning passed, but five or six hundred canoes were seen fishing beyond the beach; in the space of four years not one tenth part of that number were to be found in the whole town.

The town of Elmina, La Mina, or Oddena, as the natives call it, stands on the river Benja, in a low, flat peninsula, formed by the ocean on the south, the river on the north, Commendo on the west, and the famous citadel of St. George d'Elmina on the east. Towards Commendo it is fortified with a strong wall of large stone, brought from an adjacent rock, a deep ditch, and some pieces of cannon mounted on each side of the gate: the wall begins at the sea-side, and stretches along to the banks of the river which separates the town from the fort on Mount St. Jago. This fort the Dutch call Conradsbourgh, which they built for the security of Elmina, upon a situation that equally commands the town and their chief factory.

The natives of Elmina are well limbed, clean made, and robust, of a warlike disposition, but more civilized and polished than other Negroes, on account of their familiar acquaintance with the Europeans. Their usual occupations are fishing, trading, and making palm wine and oil. They come to market with their fish about mid-day, paying the Dutch a fifth by way of customs. Their commerce extends along the coast even to Whidah. They have great address in adulterating the precious metals, and pretend that they acquired the art from the Portuguese; if so, they greatly excel their instructors. In Elmina are a great number of neat artisans, who work in metals in a manner little inferior to the best European mechanics. They cast and carve in gold and silver; they make buttons, plain or filigree rings, chains, sword hilts, and other ornaments; nor are they ignorant of the method of cutting, grinding, and polishing crystal and glass, and of giving it all shapes and forms. In the town are about two hundred houses, and hardly any but has its mechanics.

The town is divided into three districts, each having its particular rights, and governed by a chief, whom the Negroes call *brasso*. Under them the *brassos* have *cabo-ceroes*, and certain inferior officers, the ministers of justice in ordinary cases. The three chiefs, with their councils, form the regency and legislative part of this small republic, since the Portuguese rendered it independent of the kings of Fetu and Commendo, who enjoy the sovereignty of all the country besides. In this condition, and from the nature of their government, it was, that the inhabitants of Elmina found means to render themselves formidable to all their neighbours; their freedom inspiring them with a courage, a freedom, a boldness, and independency of thought and action, no where else on the Gold Coast to be met with. First they maintained their liberty under the Portuguese, and afterwards of the Dutch, but no sooner had the latter begun to limit their privileges, to retrench their rights, and to mix in their government, than that spirit, which was the soul of their courage, vanished, and they became timid, cautious, and dastardly, like slaves, fearful of disobeying the nod of an imperious master<sup>e</sup>.

Before we proceed to the description of the Dutch fort, we shall beg leave to mention a few particulars concern-

<sup>e</sup> Bosman, Barbot, & Smith, in *locis citatis*.



ing the river Benja, which glides by the walls of the town of Elmina. Monsieur Foequenbergh observes of the waters of this stream, that they are ten times more salt than the saltest brine or pickle. In the months of May and June it is sweet and potable, from the quantity of rain that pours down in streams from the hills. It is only in the dry seasons that it is remarkable for its saltness, which Foequenbergh attributes to the nitrous quality of the soil; but perhaps more properly to the evaporation of the seawater by the intense heat of the sun, and the shallowness of the channel; for he acknowledges that the tide runs for two miles up the river. What confirms our opinion is the practice of the natives, who generally make their salt after a high tide, which they let by sluices into basons, or small ponds dug in the earth. Here the water is evaporated, and a fine bay salt produced in the same manner as in different parts of Europe.

The citadel of Elmina, standing in the center of the Gold Coast, is extremely commodiously situated for the purposes of trade, and the protection and security of the trader. Its situation is upon a rock, bounded on one side by the ocean, and also defended by strong bastions. The whole building is square, surrounded by a high stone wall, cannon proof. As the company have spared no expence in beautifying and fortifying this settlement, it is beyond contradiction one of the most complete on the coast. The fort, exclusive of the outworks, is forty Rhindland yards in length, and thirty-two in breadth, surrounded by four grand bastions, or four interior batteries. Two of these point towards the sea, and are of a prodigious height, the point of the peninsula on which they stand being a high perpendicular rock; the other two front the river, where the land descends by a gentle declivity. Upon these four batteries are mounted forty pieces of heavy cannon, with a multitude of swivels and patereroes. A little lower stands another battery of large iron cannon, chiefly intended for salutes and public rejoicings.

The garrison is composed of a hundred white men, well officered, and an equal number of free Negroes in the pay of the company. On the land side are two canals cut in the rock, serving for the security, the conveniency, and the ornament of the citadel, supplying it with fresh water, at the same time that, by means of a draw-bridge, and two redoubts mounted with eight pieces of cannon, it renders it strong, and almost inaccessible. Here nature took the least care in fortifying it; but this defect art has com-

compensated, by portcullises, strong barricadoes, and iron rails of prodigious weight. The guard-house, which stands immediately behind, is a strong building, well defended with swivels. It is inconceivable with what toil and expence these works have been completed, all the houses being built of a stone hewn out of a hard rock, and the canals of a great depth, effected by the same labour. They were begun by the Portuguese, but not completed when the place fell into the hands of the Dutch.

The principal building is a magnificent square stone house, divided into a number of different apartments. The upper part of it is appointed for the governor's residence, which we ascend by a grand flight of stairs, of black and white stone. At the very top of the house are placed two swivels, and a variety of small artillery, which command the armory, and are defended by a strong guard of soldiers. In our way thither we meet with a fine long gallery, beautifully ornamented with hard plaister, carved with great art, and lighted by Venetian windows, handsomely glazed. There is a spacious chapel with a rich altar, where prayers are every day read. Along the ramparts, by the river side, is the infirmary of the sick and wounded, capable of containing a hundred persons, attended by the surgeons of the fort. The magazines for stores, provisions, and merchandize, are large, convenient, and well stocked. Nor is the factory or residence of the agents neglected; there are accommodations for sixty persons, the number of servants; exclusive of soldiers, retained by the company. On the porch of the old store-house there is an inscription, intimating the year when the foundation was laid, in the reign of John the Second of Portugal, viz. in 1484. The letters, engraved on a hard stone, are as distinct and clear as if they had stood but a few years. All merchandize and goods enter the fort by a gate towards the sea, at which a crane and other machines for raising them, and unloading the ships, are erected. In a word, though the citadel is strong, it has more the air of a palace than of a fortress, or a house destined for the purpose of commerce. It was far from being thus beautiful while possessed by the Portuguese; it was the Dutch West India company that gave it this perfection, at a great expence, which they have no cause to regret. Smith affirms, that it is larger, more convenient, and beautiful, than Cape Coast, but less pleasant on account of the situation.

*The fort of  
Conradsb-  
burgh.*

On the north side of the river Benja the company have built the fort of Conradsbourgh, on Mount St. Jago, so called from a Portuguese chapel dedicated to that saint. Fortifying this hill the company judged necessary for the security of Elmina, though if the enemy once got possession of it, they would soon be in a condition to oblige the citadel to surrender. Hence it follows, that it obstinately defended, an enemy will be able to carry on no approaches against the citadel by land; but from the moment they get possession of Conradsbourgh, they are masters also of Elmina. Conradsbourgh stands in the kingdom of Fetu, just on the frontier. Its form is quadrangular, with a strong bastion at each angle, and a curtain between each, twelve feet high, built of stone; behind which stand four batteries, mounted with forty-eight cannon. The interior edifice consists of a tower, which commands all the adjacent country, and affords a commodious lodging for a garrison of twenty-five soldiers, with their officers. The garrison is relieved every day from Elmina; and upon emergencies increased to double the number. As it is a post of the utmost importance, it is constantly well supplied with stores and provisions, and the fortifications kept in constant repair. On the side of Elmina it is not difficult of access, there being a fine road cut by an easy ascent out of the rock; but on this side it cannot be attacked by an enemy, who must necessarily be between two fires, that from Elmina and the post of St. Jago. Towards Fetu and Commendo nothing can be stronger than the situation, which is a high perpendicular rock. The bridge over the river, which forms the communication between the two forts, is altogether after the Dutch fashion, with a drawbridge in the middle. At the foot of the hill stands a large magazine, where they lay up their canoes in the wet season. This also is the repository of carpenter's tools, and all other mechanical instruments. Near this are seen a great number of tombs, with ridiculous figures cut upon stone, the workmanship of the Negroes, in compliment to the memory of their kings who lie buried here.

*The com-  
pany's gar-  
dens.*

Below Mount St. Jago, on the north side, the company have a fine garden, inclosed by high stone walls, and divided into beautiful allies and parterres, by rows of orange, lemon, palm, and cocoa-trees. Here they have all sorts of fruits, roots, and pulse peculiar to that country, as well as the natural growth of Europe. In the center stands a magnificent dome or temple, surrounded by lofty trees,  
that



that afford the most delightful cooling shade and fragrance. In a word, all the fruits produced here are the best in their several kinds, and in particular their sweet oranges yield in nothing to those raised in China; by many they are thought superior<sup>f</sup>.

We have already observed that this settlement was made by the Portuguese, and that the fort of Elmina, with the trade to this part of the coast, was vested in a company, with exclusive privileges, which flourished for many years, until the commerce was gradually engrossed by the vigilance, art, and industry of the Holland traders.

We need not wonder at the success of the Dutch, and the preference given to them by the natives, if we consider the arbitrary manner in which the Portuguese traded. They obliged the Negroes to keep their warehouses constantly filled, to barter their gold for whatever kind of goods they thought fit to give in exchange: the nobles of the district of Elmina lived in perpetual terror: upon the smallest suspicion, frequently upon false evidences, their persons were imprisoned, and all their effects seized and confiscated. Thus, for a time, the African trade became greatly advantageous to Portugal; but it could not last long under so despotic a government. The natives threw off the yoke as soon as they found themselves succoured by the Dutch; yet, in the sequel, it appeared, that they had only exchanged one set of tyrants for another, the Dutch being now as arbitrary as lately the Portuguese had been. It must, however, be acknowledged, that the country is obliged to the Portuguese for many advantages it has received, although they had only their own interest in view, and that mistakenly. The cattle, fruits, and grain have been increased by their means, and many of these, entirely unknown in the country, are now so abundant as to be thought indigenous. The Portuguese supported all the inconveniences of the climate much better than the Dutch. This difference most travellers have attributed to their temperance and sobriety; but their women are said to have been more susceptible of diseases peculiar to the country. It would be difficult to explain this phenomenon, and it is the business rather of the physician than the historian. As the Portuguese, who settled on the coast, intermarried with the Negroes, a race of mulattoes soon sprung up, more healthy than the European women, better liked, and more congenial

<sup>f</sup> Bosman. & Barbot, ubi supra.

to the blacks; and such is the force of custom, no less agreeable to the Europeans than the Lisbon ladies. Nevertheless, their arbitrary government alienated the minds of the natives from them, and made room for the establishment of the Dutch, of which we are now to speak.

When the Hollanders first began to settle on the Gold Coast, the highest rank among them was that of military officers. The government constantly employed the soldiers as clerks and agents in the counting-house, if they were capable of business. The misconduct and irregular behaviour of the soldiery, obliged the company to alter this method, and totally to exclude them from the direction of trade, and all civil affairs; a change more agreeable to the constitution of a commercial state, and the general interest of commerce, though frequently attended with inconveniencies, from the jarring interests and inclinations of the civil and military power. At present, the servants of the company are gradually raised to the highest employments, passing a kind of probation in the several inferior stations. Hence, by understanding the proper duty of each department, they are reasonably supposed to direct the whole with more ability.

*The regulations of the Dutch factory.*

The first step towards the post of director-general is that of sub-deputy, whose appointments are twenty-four florins per month. These sub-deputies receive all the gold, and give in their accounts to the inferior factors, and sometimes to the chief factor, who is accountable to the company. As the public magazines, stores, and warehouses, are at Elmina, the employment of sub-factor is of consequence, he having a great share in the regulation of markets, and the necessaries of life. Thus the head factor, who is responsible for the conduct of his inferiors, holds a delicate post, that requires great address, diligence, and judgment: the eyes of all are upon him, and he is equally to satisfy the expectations of the Negroes, the settlement, and the company. From the sub-factors are chosen the commissaries or governors of the smaller settlements dependent on Elmina. These are obliged to reside at their several governments, and without any other authority or power than in affairs relative to trade. Their salaries are thirty-six florins per month, exclusive of ten florins for their domestics, and twenty for the expence of their table, besides the profits arising from private trade. The fort of Mawri, or Cormantin, being the most considerable inferior settlement, this government is bestowed upon persons of the greatest experience, diligence, and merit. The gift of it

is reserved to themselves by the company, all the others being in the disposal of the director-general. Till the year 1699, the governor of Mawri derived great advantages from the slave trade to the coasts of Ardrah and Whidah. The profits were so large, that the gold trade was neglected and sunk to the lowest ebb. Upon information given to the company, they determined to commit the slave trade solely to the commanders of ships, which Bosman speaks of as a greater evil than what they intended to remedy. Their ignorance of the manners and customs of the natives led them into numberless difficulties, and their low rank in life and rough manner into contempt. The company lost the esteem of the natives, and that respect, which will ever attend grandeur and power, vanished as soon as the trade was taken out of the hands of those who alone could support it with dignity.

Besides those immediately employed in trade, the company maintain a number of other officers on the coast of Africa. Of these the fiscal is the chief in rank and profit. His salary is sixty florins per month, ten for paying the expence of domestics, with the privilege of eating at the table kept for the director-general. If his appointments should seem mean and trifling for a post of so high a nature, this deficiency is amply compensated by his perquisites. He has a third of all the gold and merchandize forfeited by interlopers or others upon the coast, and also a third of all fines upon criminals, which are so frequent as to make a handsome revenue. Next to him is the comptroller-general, whose business it is to inspect the books of the factory. The salary annexed to this post consists of seventy florins per month, and thirty-five for the expence of his table and servants. Under him he has a lieutenant, or deputy-comptroller, and two secretaries, each of whom have three hundred and ninety florins per annum. The comptroller of the garrison is the next office, whose appointment is about thirty-six florins per month. His inferiors have an equal salary, but, to supply the smallness of his, five per cent. is given upon the effects of all persons who die upon the coast, together with the power of selling them by public auction, should any dispute arise with the heirs at law concerning the amount of the property. There is also a secretary of the fort, with a salary of fifteen florins per month, but with perquisites which render the place not contemptible. The last, and formerly least lucrative employment, is that of deputy-fiscal or auditor. This place is neither agreeable nor honourable; the employment



ployment of the deputy consisting in lodging informations and proving indictments against his fellow-officers, the servants of the company, and the natives. As the nature of his office is in itself contemptible, and the salary small, in order to raise the credit of the place, the company have given him a fifth of all confiscations, and ordered that he should take rank of the sub-factors. Thus it is, that with all the ignominy and ill-will annexed to his employment, he is at present raised to the rank of the third person for consideration belonging to the factory <sup>a</sup>.

The interests of religion are by no means cultivated with the same care as those of trade; for in this whole tract of country the Dutch have but one chaplain or minister of the gospel. The stipend of this clergyman is very considerable, amounting to a hundred florins per month, exclusive of ten florins to defray the expence of domestics, spiritual fines, and the constant use of the governor's table. The fines arise chiefly from mulcting, according to their rank and ability, every person who absents himself from divine service <sup>b</sup>.

*Descrip-  
tion of  
Oegwa.*

Before we proceed to a description of Cape Coast, the chief English settlement upon the coast of Guinea, we shall briefly take notice of a considerable town lying between Elmina and Cape Coast. The town we mean is Agua, or Oegwa, standing, according to Artus, on the brow of an eminence, raising itself by a gentle ascent to a considerable height, and defended by rocks, against which the waves beat with the utmost violence, and a noise which is heard at a great distance <sup>c</sup>.

Barbot affirms, that Oegwa contains above five hundred houses, disjoined by narrow crooked streets; and that from the sea it has the appearance of an amphitheatre <sup>d</sup>. Des Marchais reduces the number of houses to two hundred, in the center of which stands a large square building, the repository of their gold dust, and other commodities (M). The houses are built of earth and

<sup>a</sup> Aut. *supra* citat. *ibid.*  
Coll. de De Bruy, part vi. p. 114.

<sup>b</sup> Barbot, p. 168.

<sup>c</sup> Dans

<sup>d</sup> *Ibid.*

(M) Almost all writers agree, that the town of Oegwa is entirely commanded by the cannon of Elmina; which plainly indicates an error in the best Dutch charts of the

Gold Coast, where the town is placed half way between Elmina and Cape Coast, namely, four miles and a half from either.

clay,

clay, but convenient, and well furnished with chairs, stools, mats, carpets, earthen pots, and even looking-glasses, which last they purchase from the Europeans. No part of the coast is better provided with all kinds of eatables, which are sent in from the adjacent cantons, and sold in public markets. Every thing is bought and sold with gold dust, which is the standard of all other commodities, and brought hither in great abundance from all quarters of Fetu, Abrambo, Assiento, and Mandingo<sup>m</sup>. The gold is sold by weight, and the quantity determined by nice scales, made in the country before it was frequented by the Europeans: a proof that those Negroes are not wholly ignorant of the more refined principles of mechanics. Next to gold, their chief commerce of the place consists in the sale of fish, of which they catch prodigious quantities on the coast. Although the natives are brave and warlike, yet in time of peace no people are more industrious, their whole time being employed in catching fish or cultivating the fruits of the earth. They are extremely expert in throwing the lines, and fishing by the hook; nor is their intrepidity in combating the elements, and pursuing their employments in all kinds of weather, less astonishing. Every day in the week, except Wednesday, which is sacred to the fetiche, they employ in their several occupations, and no season of the year exempted from fishing. Their canoes weather storms which would endanger the largest shipping; and the Negroes have the dexterity of making their advantage of those seasons, which obliges others to discontinue their labours, by throwing their lines with the same success in tempestuous as in calm weather <sup>n</sup>.

The name of Cape Coast, by which the English call their chief settlement, is thought to be a corruption of Cabo Corso, the ancient Portuguese appellation. This cape is formed by an angular point, washed on the south and east by the sea, upon which stands the English fort, nine miles from Elmina. Here the Portuguese settled, in 1610, and built the citadel of Cape Coast, upon a large rock that projects into the sea. A few years afterwards, they were dislodged by the Dutch, to whom this place owes its principal strength. In 1664, it was demolished by admiral Holmes, after his expedition against fort Witsen, at Taberari. In 1665, De Ruyter, the famous Dutch admiral, had orders from the states to revenge the

*A description and history of Cape Coast, the chief English settlement in Guinea.*

<sup>m</sup> Des Marchais, tom. i. p. 266.

<sup>n</sup> Barbot, p. 170.

insults committed by the English. With a squadron of thirteen men of war he attacked all the settlements of this nation along the coast, ruined all the factories, and took, burnt, and sunk all the shipping of the English company: but after all his endeavours he was frustrated in his attempts on this fort, although at that time it had not recovered the damage done it by Holmes. The treaty of Breda having confirmed Cape Coast to the English, and the king granting a new charter, in 1672, the directors applied all their attention to fortifying and rendering commodious this their chief possession.

The walls are high and thick, especially on the land side, built partly of stone, but chiefly of brick, which the English made at a small distance. To the height and strength of its walls the fort owes its chief security, and the neighbouring Negroes dependent on the company derive from them a protection against the incursions of the Fantins. The interior parade, raised twenty feet above the surface of the work, forms a quadrangular space, cooled by the gentle refreshing sea breezes, to which it lies open, and pleasantly situated, having Queen Anne's Point, and all the shipping in the road of Anamaboa. This platform is defended by three pieces of large cannon, the three other sides of the square being extremely well built, containing spacious lodgings, with their offices and other conveniences; but particularly the south side, which is occupied by a handsome chapel, adjoining to the walls of the fort, or rather the walls making one side. The three pieces of artillery on the platform command the road and its entrance; nor is the landing-place less exposed to the fire of the musquetry behind the rocks. The fort has four bastions, mounted with twenty-nine pieces of cannon. On the battlements are ten pieces of cannon, and six upon the wall towards Tabara, of no other use than to command the respect of those Negroes, and to keep them in awe. Towards the sea, the perspective of Cape Coast is beautiful and regular; the fortifications are happily imagined, and all the assistance that could possibly be drawn from art is added to nature. You enter it by a large gate, well fortified, which leads to the square parade we have mentioned, capable of receiving five hundred men drawn up. The four bastions communicate with each other by covered ways and curtains, forming a beautiful chain of batteries of fifteen cannon, pointed



towards the road. Smith says, that the whole artillery of the fort amounts to forty pieces of large cannon, exclusive of demi-culverines<sup>p</sup>. Phillips says, that the garrison is composed of a hundred men; and Barbot mentions that number of Europeans, besides as many Negroes in the pay of the company, with their proper officers, all clothed in red. The gates are shut every evening at eight o'clock, and defended by a regular guard.

With all its advantages of situation, Cape Coast has also its inconveniences: among these are some neighbouring hills, by means of which it would be no difficult matter for an enemy greatly to embarrass and annoy the fort. This it is that obliges the English to study the inclinations of the natives, to keep well with them, and engage them by acts of kindness into a strict alliance. They spare neither presents nor caresses, exclusive of the tribute paid to the king of Fetu, by way of acknowledgement for the ground they possess.

The soldiers at Cape Coast are lodged in the best barracks of any upon the coast of Guinea, and receive their pay daily in gold dust. Here are also convenient apartments for the slaves, forges for smiths, shades and work-houses for carpenters and other mechanics, together with a convenient public kitchen for the use of the settlement<sup>q</sup>.

The governor's apartments communicate with the chapel, which is no more than a large hall, answering a double purpose, that of a church and dining-room. The first story is ornamented with a handsome balcony, extending the whole length of the front; and the accounting-house is large and convenient. A little way from the gate is a prison for criminals, accused of capital crimes, where they are detained till an occasion offers of sending them over to England, to take their final trial. Finally, there is cut in the rock beneath the platform a large vault, for the confinement of slaves. This horrid dungeon is divided into a number of cells, well contrived to prevent their revolting, or forming conspiracies. Such only are confined there as are purchased for exportation. An iron grate serves it for a roof, to admit the air, and as much light as is thought necessary; and the numbers of ships which frequent the coast prevent their being so long detained as to contract distempers, the consequence of close confinement. The cistern for preserving their water, by which the fort is chiefly supplied, is capable of holding four hun-

<sup>p</sup> Barbot & Smith, *ibid*.

<sup>q</sup> Smith, *ubi supra*.

dred hogheads. It is dug in the rock, and made as convenient as the nature of such a necessary contrivance will admit; for besides this, they have no water but what is brought from a considerable distance<sup>r</sup>.

*Salaries,  
bank, and  
employment  
of the differ-  
ent officers  
in the com-  
pany's ser-  
vice at  
Cape Coast.*

Formerly the salary and perquisites of the governor were very considerable, amounting to two thousand pounds per annum; at present they are dwindled to half that sum, and the chief profits arising from trade. His council is composed of the governors of the out-forts, in which he has no more than a single voice; but as this is assembled upon extraordinary occasions only; the chief management of affairs devolves upon him. The presidency of Cape Coast is lodged in the hands of one man, appointed by the committee directors of the African trade. At present the commerce consists chiefly in gold dust and slaves, the former being returned to Europe, laid out in trade, or the purchase of slaves for the West Indies. The company's gardens, which are no less than eight miles in circumference, are the chief beauty of the place, but without walls or any other inclosure, all the place going by this name being surrounded with trees. Here the soil is fertile, producing every sort of fruit to be found in the warmer climates, as lemons, oranges, citrons, guavas, mangoes, plantains, bananas, pine-apples, tamarinds, cucumbers, water-melons, coco-nuts, and every kind of salad and roots<sup>s</sup>.

*Description  
of the com-  
pany's gar-  
dens.*

*Account of  
the sur-  
rounding  
country.*

The sea-coast extends from east to west, facing directly the south. The country is encumbered with mountains, which, without having any extraordinary height, render the vallies narrow, upon account of their standing so close to each other. They are covered with a sort of low thick briar, that renders them impassable, except where the paths are cut. The Negroes do not cultivate one tenth of the ground; and six months interruption will produce a new crop of briars in those places they had entirely cleared. The surface of the earth is in general sandy, poor, and gravelly, a kind of soil which in this country we find productive of thorns and brambles. A little lower is a kind of white marl, and somewhat deeper a brown earth, of a dry, sandy nature. We here speak of the hills, the vallies being in general fertile and rich, except round Cape Coast, where the land is dry and sterile: except here, the kingdom of Fetu is peculiarly rich and fruitful, and the ground well cultivated. The people are numerous

<sup>r</sup> Atkins, p. 99. Barbot, *ibid*.

<sup>s</sup> Phillips, p. 207, *ubi supra*.

and industrious, employing themselves in the gold trade, fishing, agriculture, or some other business supplying the necessities of life. They send great quantities of provisions to the markets of Elmina, no less to their own advantage than to the conveniency of the Dutch. Their fish is excellent and abundant; their fowls, and especially the Muscovia ducks, are good and cheap; the mutton and goats flesh of the country lean and insipid; beef scarce, and pigeons in great plenty<sup>1</sup>.

With regard to the climate, Barbot says, that it is neither better nor worse than that of the other kingdoms of the Gold Coast; although he observed every morning and evening a thick fog spread itself over the face of the country, which he imagines could arise from no very good cause, nor continue without carrying sickness and disease with it: but the principal cause of the unhealthiness of the country he places in the quality of their food. Smith, on the other hand, affirms the air to be the most wholesome, and the people the most healthy of any on the Gold Coast; nay, he calls Cape Coast the most supportable situation in all Guinea.

*Of the climate.*

In the neighbourhood of Cape Coast the English have built two forts, the one called Philips's Tower, and the other Fort Royal, or Queen Anne's Fort: each of them are three quarters of a mile distant from the Cape Coast; the first standing on an eminence on the side of the garden, south-east of the fort. In Bosman's time Philips's Tower was garrisoned with six men, to keep the Negroes in awe, by means of some pieces of cannon, and to guard against the incursions of the neighbouring nations. Philip speaks of a redoubt raised upon an eminence, resembling those little watch-towers on the coast of Spain, to alarm the country upon the approach of the Moorish or Turkish pirates. It was garrisoned with a few men, and mounted two or three pieces of small cannon, to sound the alarm upon the smallest danger<sup>2</sup>.

*An account of two forts near Cape Coast.*

Queen Anne's Fort is situated near the village of Manfro, upon a hill called Danistein, where Fredericksburgh formerly stood. At present it is a square building, mounted with sixteen pieces of cannon, twelve of them standing on a platform, and guarded by six white men, and an equal number of blacks. Des Marchais says, that it is accessible only by a crooked path, which forms a kind of spiral street, bordered on each side by Negro huts<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Aust. cit.

<sup>2</sup> Bosman, Epist. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Tom. i. p. 203.



*The great  
festival at  
Abramboe.*

The town of Manfro is of an oval form, situated on the banks of a river, in a place almost inaccessible, on account of rugged rocks that surround it. The inhabitants are continually busied in fishing, agriculture, and making salt, a commodity greatly wanted in that country; and many of them act as factors to the merchants of the interior countries. To conclude our account of the kingdom of Fetu, there is held at Abramboe a brilliant assembly of the natives from all parts of the kingdom, to celebrate, by dancing and other diversions, the birth-day of the king. Here an incredible number of Negroes of both sexes pass the whole day and night in this fatiguing exercise. The only division of time at Fetu consists in the sitting of the courts of judicature at certain periods, at which all causes of property, that cannot be determined by the inferior judges of districts, are tried and finally decided. This supreme court is composed of the king, the prime minister, the jarassio, the brassio, and two English factors, chosen by the governor of Cape Coast. These two commissaries appear at every session in new suits, an expence which costs the company annually the sum of three hundred pounds sterling. Finally, Aquassio is a Negro town, west of Cape Coast, that has the reputation of being large and populous, with a market, where the natives buy and sell their slaves which they intend should be sacrificed at the interment of their king, and buried with him.

#### *Of the Kingdoms of Sabu and Fantin.*

*Ageographical  
description of  
Sabu.*

IT is not the extent of Sabu that has attracted the attention of voyagers; for this is so inconsiderable as to be confined to two leagues, some say miles, from east to west along the coast, and four from south to north into the inland country. It begins at the foot of mount Danistein, and ends within a mile or two of Mawri, or Mawerri, there joining the kingdom of Fantin, its boundaries being the sea, and the countries of Atti and Fetu on the south and west. Sabu produces an amazing quantity of Indian corn, potatoes, yams, bananas, oranges, lemons, and other fruits; besides palm oil, with which it supplies the country of Akra and Axim. The natives pass for the most industrious people on the Gold Coast, being in a perpetual course of employment, either in tilling the earth, fishing,

y Auct. citat.

or

or trading with the Europeans, or Akanese, a nation that exchanges gold for the fish and fruits of Sabu.

Bosman represents the Negroes of Sabu as equal in power to those of Commendo, and nothing inferior to them in villainy and treachery; probably because they disappointed the design of the Hollanders against Commendo. This writer runs out into bitter invectives against the king of Sabu, for having, under pretence of mediating a peace, ruined the Dutch affairs by a politic procrastination and delay, which he calls fraudulent and wicked; although by his acknowledgement the conduct of the Dutch merited every artifice that could possibly distress or oblige them to abandon the country: but what chiefly excites Bosman's indignation is, that his countrymen should not only be forced to acquiesce in the conduct of the king of Sabu, but also to engage him by presents from siding with the Commendians<sup>2</sup> *Hinc illæ lachrymæ!* Barbot, on the contrary, attributes the animosity of the Negroes against the Dutch to that brutish insolence and barbarity that characterize this nation wherever they have acquired dominion. He adds, that, with the affection of the natives, the Dutch have likewise lost their trade; and that the king of Sabu in particular has frequently offered to assist with two thousand men, supported at his own expence, any European nation that would undertake to expel the Dutch from the coast. His disgust arose from the intrigues of the Hollanders, to seduce the inhabitants of Mawri from their allegiance to him, to excite them to a revolt, and persuade them to refuse paying the usual tribute and homage<sup>3</sup>. It appears from the distinct testimony of Artus, that the disaffection of the Negroes to the Dutch was by no means voluntary, or the effects of caprice, but the result of a series of ill usage, and an arbitrary, cruel usurpation in the governor of Elmina: they were far from wishing to disturb commerce; but they panted eagerly after freedom, and longed to remove that iron scourge held over them by the Hollanders.

For a number of years the Negroes of Sabu were in a perpetual state of hostilities with those of Atti and Akana: but the late king, being of a mild and pacific disposition, put an end to those troubles, and restored peace and tranquillity. The Sabuans were always inferior in number to their enemies, but sufficiently made up that deficiency by the use of fire-arms, in which they were expert. They

*Bosman's  
account of  
the Sa-  
buans.*

*Barbot's  
account of  
the Dutch.*

<sup>2</sup> Epist. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Barbot, p. 171.

frequently brought loads of their enemies heads to the Dutch fort at Mawri, as a token of their respect and submission <sup>b</sup>.

*Sabu the capital.*

*The English fort on Queen Anne's Point.*

*Mawri.*

The city of Sabu, where the king has his residence, stands two leagues from the coast. It is long and populous; and Des Marchais describes it as a fine city, north-north-east of Mawri. The first place westward which deserves mention is the English fort on Queen Anne's Point, built with stone and lime, upon an eminence about a mile from Fort Royal, or mount Danistein, and two miles from Nassau Fort on the east. It is defended by five pieces of cannon, and a garrison of five white and as many black men. Near this lies the village Ikon, or Congo, where may be seen the ruins of a Dutch factory, the principal intention of which was to descry European ships at sea, which were coming to disturb the commerce of Mawri. Next stands Mawri, or Mouree, a town half a mile from Congo, and, according to Artus, upon an eminence, without being more healthy, clean, or regular, than if it stood in a plain. Its market is bad, and every thing, even palm wine and fruits, scarce and dear. It is the immediate property of the king of Sabu, who levies his rights by proper officers, under his own direction, and accountable only to him. The chief trade of the place consists in crude gold dust, with which canoes every day arrive from all the sea-port towns. Before the Dutch fixed their residence here, it was a petty inconsiderable place: at present it carries on a trade the most flourishing of any besides Elmina and Cape Coast on the coast of Guinea. Villault affirms, that it contains above two hundred houses, which surround three sides of the Dutch fort Nassau. In his time it was supplied by the Akanese, and by Ikon, or Congo; though then it had the reputation of a place rich in gold, but poor in the conveniences and necessaries of life. The greater part of the inhabitants are fishermen, who go out every morning in four or five hundred canoes, paying on their return one fifth of their fish to the Dutch factor in the town, by way of toll or tribute. This kind of tribute they also exact at Elmina and Schana, in right of conquest; though Bosman does not pretend that they have yet conquered Mawri <sup>c</sup>. No other Europeans have this prerogative, nor do any of them exercise the same sovereign authority as the Dutch, who would seem to affect despotism abroad, in proportion to the freedom of their

<sup>b</sup> Bosman, Epist. 4.      <sup>c</sup> Ibid.



constitution at home. A great number of Akanese have lately settled at Mawri, for the conveniency of trading with the Dutch. The houses stand at a great distance from each other, and the intervening space is generally filled up with a rock, which makes the passing from one to another incommodious, and sometimes dangerous. It is called the grave of Dutchmen, on account of the great number who have died there; yet is the place still in a flourishing condition, because all ships bound to the Gold Coast are forced to wood and water here <sup>d</sup>.

Fort Nassau, the greatest Dutch settlement in Guinea, *Fort Nassau.* except Elmina, stands upon a rock, washed towards the south by the sea. It owes its origin to the Hollanders, who made it their head settlement as long as Elmina was in the hands of the Portuguese. Its form is nearly quadrangular: it is provided with four batteries and eighteen pieces of cannon; and, if we except Elmina, its walls are the highest of any fort on the coast. The curtain comprehends the two sea batteries, and is so spacious and convenient as easily to admit of such a battery as the English have on the platform at Cape Coast; but the greatest ornament and strength of the fort consists in four towers at each angle, well provided with artillery, musquets, and stores. According to Barbot, Fort Nassau was built in the year 1669, by order and at the expence of the States General, who gave it the name of Nassau, in compliment to the prince of Orange. At first it was intended for no other purpose than to awe the inhabitants of Mawri. The States soon made it over to the West India company, but in a condition very different from its present state, the works being all of earth, were often destroyed by the rains, and left the garrison exposed to the insults of the Portuguese at Elmina. No sooner had the Dutch seized upon this fort, than they seriously applied their thoughts to securing themselves upon the coast, and fortifying Nassau. They built stone walls and bastions, together with commodious apartments for the governors and factors, and garrisoned it with seventy or eighty soldiers. At a small distance from the fort the company have a fine garden, kept in excellent order, and neatly laid out in parterres, groves, and shades of fruit-trees; but it has one fault in common with the gardens of Elmina and Manfro, and that is the vicinity of high mountains, whence torrents of rain rush down, that

<sup>d</sup> Barbot, ubi supra.

frequently destroy the roots, herbs, and all the labour of the gardener<sup>c</sup>.

*Geographical description of the kingdom of Fantin.*

Next follows the kingdom of Fantin, bounded by Sabu on the west, the Iron mount half a mile below Mawri being its extremity. This hill is a quarter of a mile long at the base, and hath from its bottom to its summit a charming walk, so thick shaded with trees that the sun is excluded at noon day. From the foot of this hill Fantin extends about ten miles eastward along the coast, having on the north side Arti, Agua, and Tongua; Akron on the east; and the sea on the south. The English and Dutch have each their separate forts in this country, and the former three small lodges besides. The first English flag that presents itself is at Anicàn, or Ingenisian, standing upon a little eminence two miles from Mawri. Formerly the Dutch had a settlement here; but finding the trade did not answer, on account of the share which the English and Danes had in it, they resolved to abandon it. Upon this the English took possession. In Bosman's time it was defended by only one white man and two Negroes, a formidable power, says he, to support the honour of the British flag. Barbot says the Portuguese had likewise a settlement here, defended by a redoubt, and a garrison of six Portuguese and twelve Blacks. Their trade consisted in pipes, tobacco, soap, rum, and several American commodities.

*The English fort at Anamaboa.*

Half a mile below this, says Bosman, and two miles, according to Barbot, the English have a fort at Anamaboa, or Jamisia. Philips represents Anamaboa as a handsome large town; but the inhabitants as the most rascally lying people on the Gold Coast, surprisingly artful in debasing and counterfeiting the precious metal. The town stood under the cannon of the English fort, and the road was constantly filled with ships. This place would afford a considerable gold and slave trade, says Bosman, if the English and Zealand interlopers had not met with so much encouragement, and so firmly established a traffick. Anamaboa may faithfully be reputed the most powerful town upon the whole coast, being able to arm as many able-bodied men as the whole kingdom of Commendo, or Sabu; and yet in proportion not a fifth of Fantin. The town is divided into two parts, one inhabited by the fishermen of Elmina, the other by those of Fantin, who pay a certain

duty to the brasso for the liberty of pursuing their callings. They formerly treated the English garrison with so much insolence, as often to block them within their walls; and frequently, if they disliked the governor, they sent him in a canoe to Cape Coast, with marks of the utmost contempt. At present, however, there is a new fort in this place, kept on a much more respectable footing. The Negroes of Fantin are the most turbulent and desperate of any upon the coast; and were it not for their civil divisions, they would become unmanageable and dangerous neighbours to all the surrounding states. In 1701, they declared war against the English, and the Dutch were suspected of supplying them with powder. Upon Sunday the 4th of September they assembled in a tumultuous manner before the fort, setting fire to the exterior buildings, and going on with their outrages, till they were dispersed by a discharge of the cannon from the batteries. The night following the English took their revenge, by setting fire to the greater part of the town of Anamaboa, and laying it in ashes; and thus, after open hostilities had been carried on for the space of twenty days, the natives offered a truce, leaving the terms to the English governor, and the king of Sebu acting as mediator. No objection was made to the demands of the English, and they agreed to satisfy them for damage done to the fort; taking their fetiches solemnly to witness the sincerity of their intentions, and giving several of their children as hostages. However, after the arrival of an English interloper, who promised them ten per cent. extraordinary on the price of slaves, they forgot all their engagements, entered a second time upon hostilities, and carried on the war with such vigour, that Bloom affirms, the governor and garrison, seized with a panic, fled to Cape Coast.

The greatest inconvenience attending the situation of the English fort at Anamaboa, arises from the difficulty of landing from the ships, the shore being covered with rocks a small distance into the sea, or rendered equally dangerous by a continual high surf. All ships are forced to come to an anchor without side of the rocks, and goods are landed by means of canoes upon a sandy point, surrounded by a wall, built at the expence of the company, and rendered convenient by lodgings for the Negroes under the cannon of the fort. The soil here is well calculated for making bricks, and the abundance of shells upon the coast sufficiently furnishes them with excellent lime; so that build-



*An account  
of the adja-  
cent coun-  
try.*

ing here is cheap, especially as the country affords great plenty of wood and timber.

Round Anamaboa the country is mountainous ; but the hills are at a sufficient distance from the town : five in particular are remarkably high, and serve as land-marks at sea. As they are covered with wood, the multitude and variety of trees form an agreeable prospect. Here the palm-wine is made in great perfection, especially that which they call quacker. Besides that the country is populous, it is exceeding rich in gold, slaves, and all the necessaries of living ; but more particularly in corn, which they sell in large quantities to the Europeans. Their opulence has had upon them the usual effects of wealth, rendering them insolent, arrogant, and haughty. In the woods of this country are found the most beautiful parroquets in the world, and an infinity of other birds. Fruits, roots, and vegetables of all kinds are in plenty, and cultivated with little trouble : it is really amazing to see countries so contiguous as this and Sabu, so different in the qualities of the soil, the one clothed with a perpetual verdure, rich in all the productions of the earth, while the other in most places looks bare, barren, and naked, affording scarce a scanty subsistence to the indigent inhabitants <sup>f</sup>.

*Adjacent  
village.*

About half a mile from Anamaboa stands a village called Adja, or Aga, upon the sea-side. Here the Dutch formerly possessed a fort, whence they were driven by the treachery of the English, who, upon some quarrel with the people of Anamaboa, sought protection among the Hollanders, and seized that opportunity of dislodging their hosts, forgetting all the rights of justice and hospitality. At present the Dutch keep but one factor here ; and one might retort upon Bosman, the raillery he bestows on the English on another occasion. Barbot says, that the village of Aga is divided into three different districts, each of them containing twenty-five or thirty houses. It is a situation by no means favourable to commerce, the landing being dangerous and difficult for shipping ; yet round it the country produces several valuable commodities, and among others a very fine cotton. In the war between England and Holland, in 1665 and 1666, the English committed great cruelties upon the Dutch of this factory, which usage the Hollanders have since faithfully repaid in numberless instances <sup>g</sup>.

<sup>f</sup> Des Marchais, Bosman, & Barbot, ubi sup.  
Epist. 4. Artus, p. 50.

<sup>g</sup> Bosman,

Three miles from Mawri, and a little below Aga, stands the village of Little Cormantin, in contradistinction to Great Cormantin. Bosman speaks of it as a contemptible place; but Des Marchais, a later writer, assures us, that it is larger and better built than most of the villages of that country. Artus says, that, after having been a place of considerable note, it was ruined in the year 1600, since which time it never recovered its former splendor. This village is situated upon an eminence, easily distinguished by a lofty tree that grows upon the very summit. Hither the French and Portuguese drive a great trade, the Dutch also shared in it, till it was discovered that the Negroes adulterated the gold. This discovery first gave the Dutch a dislike to the trade, and at length drove away almost all the Europeans. Afterwards the trade was resumed by the Dutch, about the year 1682, when they greatly enlarged and strengthened Fort Amsterdam, the chief residence of the English, till they were driven thence by De Ruyter, in 1665. This is a square stone building, strengthened by four bastions, mounting twenty pieces of cannon. In the center is a tower, where the Dutch flag is fixed. The apartments of the officers and soldiers are neat, clean, and commodious, the parapets spacious, and fine views of the country and sea present themselves from the tower. The fort is well supplied with water, by means of large cisterns, that contain an incredible quantity of rain. Here the garrison consists of twenty-five white men, and a number of Blacks, who live happily, and at their ease, making fortunes with very little trouble or labour.

*Little Cormantin.**Amsterdam Fort.*

About cannon-shot from the fort, stands Great Cormantin, upon a high hill; a town so large and populous, as justly to merit the name given it of Great. It is situated upon a high hill, behind and under the cannon of Fort Amsterdam. The number of merchants and fishermen in the town exceed one thousand two hundred, besides other inhabitants of different occupations. Cormantin and Anamaboa were formerly the great marts of the English and Dutch commerce, as they were greatly frequented by the Akhanese, who came hither with their goods in large caravans. In 1665, Holland and England being at war, the flames spread themselves to the coast of Africa, where they broke out with great fury, each company supporting the interest and honour of their several nations with the utmost heat and animosity. In consequence, the Dutch were forced to abandon Cormantin and Anamaboa, and retire to Mawri; but the English,

*Great Cormantin.*

less

less skilful in making the proper advantage in victory than gaining it, used the Negroes with such insolence, that out of revenge they recalled the Dutch; and assisted them in building the fort, which the English took the year following. After this event, the English factors prudently strengthened their interest, by entering upon a subsidy treaty with the Brassos of Fantin and Akem, and by their means built a fort at Ananiaboa.

*Government of  
Fantin.*

Besides the above, there are other towns and villages within the district of Fantin, which carry on some trade. Agua, Laguyo, Tantimqueri, and Manpran, are the most considerable, though scarce deserving to be mentioned in history. As to the government of Fantin, it is lodged in a supreme magistrate, called a Brasso; but without the ensigns or dignity of royalty. He is the chief governor, leads their armies into the field, enjoys the greatest power of any person in the nation, but is greatly restrained, and his authority limited by the old men, who form a national council, somewhat resembling an English parliament, their votes and acts being entirely independent of the brasso. Besides the supreme brasso, every town and subdivision of the kingdom has its chief, who frequently throws off his allegiance, assumes independency, and enters upon a war with his sovereign and the council of elders. The natives of Fantin are, in general, as we have said, a hardy, bold, and intrepid people, who stick at nothing where either their revenge or interest are concerned.

*Trade and  
duties.*

They trade freely with interlopers, frequently shut up all the passages to the inland countries, and prevent all trade between the Europeans and the merchants of the interior kingdoms, either in gold or slaves: nay more, they sometimes almost starve the Dutch in their forts, by intercepting all supplies till their demands are fully complied with. In consideration of their aid in taking Fort Amsterdam, the Dutch company entered into a contract with them, that all ships, except slave ships, trading to their coast, should pay a duty of three hundred guilders; but now the Negroes make no distinction, and insist upon the same customs for all vessels whatever. They also extort a subsidy from the English, and the remonstrances of either company have hitherto had little effect <sup>b</sup>.

<sup>b</sup> Bosman, ubi supra.



*Of the Kingdoms of Acron, Agonna, and Aquamboe.*

WE now come to the remaining eastward maritime kingdoms of the Gold Coast; after describing which, we shall proceed to specify the interior countries, in order as they lie from east to west; that is, from the river Volta, to Cape Apollonia, the boundaries of this coast. The remainder of the Gold Coast from Fantin to the river Volta, contains three large kingdoms, viz. Acron, Agonna, and Aquamboe, which are divided into an infinity of lesser states. The first extends along the sea eastward from Fantin, to the mount called Monte del Diabolo, or the Devil's Mount. It is divided into Great and Little Acron; the former, which is the interior country, being under a republican government; the latter, bounded on the south by the sea, having a sovereign, and all the requisites of a pure monarchy. Notwithstanding they are absolutely independent on each other, yet has there always a strict union subsisted both living under the protection of the Fantins, who, in their turn, are obliged to the fertile and industrious Acrons for a principal part of their maintenance. In the year 1697, the Dutch began to build a fort, now strengthened by two batteries, at Apam, to which they gave the name of *Leydsamkeyd*, or *Patience*, because they met with abundance of opportunities to exercise that virtue while they were employed in the building. The village of Apam is small, and formerly, as well as at present, inhabited by fishermen only. The fort is mounted with eight pieces of cannon, and contains a garrison of sixteen men, whites and blacks; but its chief strength consists in a fine strong tower, built by Bosman's order, when he commanded at Elmina<sup>1</sup>. This is the only European settlement in this kingdom; and indeed its poverty affords no great encouragement to other nations to attempt an establishment.

Bosman relates, that though, by the constitution, the king of Acron is absolute, yet so mild was the disposition of the monarch reigning at that time, that he was influenced by all his subjects, and perfectly under the control of a nephew, a pernicious villain, whose savage humour occasioned all the quarrels between the Dutch and the natives. The other chiefs were, according to him, moderate, sensible, and good-natured people, with whom

*Kingdom of  
Acron.*

*The Dutch  
fort at  
Apam.*

*An account  
of the king  
and chiefs  
of Acron.*

it was no difficult matter to live in friendship and amity. The king he had frequently conversed with; and always found his temper sweet, mild, and engaging. He was then upwards of seventy, the richest prince upon the coast, except the king of Aquamboe, but so plain in his diet and dress, that he might be mistaken for the meanest of his subjects. As the natives of Acron live under the protection of the Fantins, they enjoy perfect ease and tranquillity, cultivate their lands in peace, and pursue their employments in security. So well do they husband their time and ground, that every year produces a plentiful harvest, by which they supply the adjacent countries, and their protectors in particular. Harts, hares, partridges and pheasants, with various other kinds of wild fowl and quadrupeds, are here in great abundance and perfection; yet amidst this plenty, the Dutch fort is poor, and the commerce trifling, although for what reason we are not informed. It is probable, that the Fantins disturb the trade, and repay here the insults they receive from the Dutch at Cormantin<sup>k</sup>.

*Productions  
of the soil.*

*Kingdom of  
Agonna.*

The country of Agonna begins at the Devil's Mount, stretching along the sea coast to the village Anonsa, on the frontiers of Aquamboe or Acra, a space of sixteen miles, bounded on the north by Songuay, and on the south by the ocean. It abounds in towns and villages along the sea, the chief of which are Dajon, Polder, Mango, Winiba, Simpa, and others. The Devil's Mount properly belongs to Agonna, though it is the frontier between this kingdom and Acron. According to most authors, it is rich in mines, the gold of which, the Negroes after heavy rain gather to a considerable quantity in the sand; however, as yet, no attempts have been made to open the mines, or the natives have opposed it for the reasons given by all the other Negroes, the apprehension of inducing the Europeans to dispossess them. Bosman relates, that when he resided in Africa, the English company had invested Mr. Baggs, governor of Cape Coast with more ample powers than any of his predecessors had ever enjoyed; upon his promise of carrying on works upon Devil's Mount, and transmitting gold to England. For this purpose he bought up all the necessary instruments, but suddenly dropt the design, probably apprehending the resentment of the natives<sup>l</sup>.

*Gold mines  
in Agonna.*

<sup>k</sup> Barbot, p. 182.

<sup>l</sup> Bosman, *ibid*.

Agonna surpasses Acron in extent and number of people, and is equal to it in fertility and beauty. It has the advantage of a fine large fresh water river, well stocked with fish and oysters. The English built a fort about the middle of Agonna, at a village called Simpa or Winiba. The roof is flat, and the building square, with a battery at each angle mounted with half pounders. In a word, it is such a fortress, as Bosman describes, that requires another fort to defend it. The village of Simpa is populous, and the natives industrious, in fishing, agriculture, and grazing; for they breed great numbers of cattle, which they sell to the neighbours. Six miles farther stands Barku, a village once frequented by the French, and remarkable for one circumstance, that the language, which is the same all along the Gold Coast, begins here to change, first into a different dialect, and a little farther into a quite different tongue. Barbot says, that this is the chief town in the kingdom of Agonna; that the surrounding country is fertile, pleasant, and exceedingly well adapted for the establishment of a factory. Formerly the English had great influence here, being allied to the queen by a formal contract; but the Dutch gained such an advantage over them, that they built a triangular fort at Barku, mounted with twelve cannons.

When Bosman wrote, Agonna was governed by a woman, and had been so for several years. This queen had a mind noble and elevated, with a strength of judgment, and piercing wit, superior to the weakness of her sex. To prevent sharing the power with a husband, she continued single; but that she might not be absolutely a stranger to the softer passion, she usually kept a young handsome small slave, with whom she amused herself in her vacant hours, prohibiting him under pain of death to intrigue with any other woman. As soon as this gallant had lost his charms, or her passions were palled, he was exchanged for another; and some affirm that she kept a number of lovers at a time <sup>m</sup>.

Next follows the kingdom of Aquamboe, bounded on the east by the river Volta, and on the west by Agonna. Prevost speaks of the district of Acra as a distinct kingdom; but we cannot discover any sufficient authority for his opinion. That part of Aquamboe which lies on the coast is called Acra, and might formerly have been an in-

<sup>m</sup> Ubi supra.



dependent state ; at present it is annexed to the crown, at least tributary to it. Aquamboe is one of the greatest monarchies on the coast of Guinea, its maritime dominions stretching twenty miles, and ten times that length into the inland parts. Bosman says, that the coast is divided into a number of petty royalties, but all of them subject to the king of Aquamboe, who indiscriminately exercises an unlimited authority over them and his meanest subjects. His despotic power gave rise to a proverbial saying, that there are only two ranks of men at Aquamboe, the royal family and the slaves. The natives of this country are haughty, turbulent, and warlike; and their power is formidable to all their neighbouring kingdoms, except Akem, which in general is an overmatch for them. All the tributary nations are miserably infested by the incursions of the Aquamboans. Whole armies enter the adjacent territories, take whatever they like, and meet with no opposition from the inhabitants, who are sensible, from experience, that the king would not fail to punish any resistance offered to his troops, esteeming that an indignity offered to his crown. In Bosman's days the supreme power was divided between the father and the son, the former retaining the greater share of authority. This had been the usual method of administration till the late reign, when the young king was deposed by his uncle, under pretence of incapacity. This double sovereignty was extremely burthenfome to the subjects, who became the slaves of two tyrants instead of one, and were sacrificed to the caprice equally of the father and the son, at the same time that they were oppressed with the expence of supporting two monarchs". "The old king," says Bosman, "was of an abject but wicked disposition, and an inveterate enemy to Europeans. Although he received from the English, Danes, and us (Dutch) an ounce of gold, in acknowledgment of the liberty granted by his predecessors of building in the Aquamboan territories, yet did he horribly pester us in the most unreasonable manner. If he but fancied that any one of the European nations had injured him, he was sure to make all three pay for it, by shutting up the passage in such a way, that no trade could be carried on till his whim and avarice were fully satisfied." His son was more-favourable to the Europeans, more regardful of the delicacy of trade, more intelligent and hospitable, and his accession to the throne

<sup>n</sup> Barbot, p. 187. Atkins, p. 107.

was of the utmost advantage to the English and Dutch factories: such was his confidence in the Dutch, that upon a certain illness with which he was seized, he put himself under the care of the surgeons of the company, and resided in the Dutch fort, till a cure was completed.

The English, Dutch, and Danes, have each of them forts at Acra, which may be looked upon as the best on the whole coast. Steering eastward, the first we meet with is the English settlement, a well built square building, with four batteries; its walls high and thick, especially towards the Dutch fort, and the whole mounted with twenty-five pieces of heavy artillery. Smith, who

*English, Dutch, and Danish forts at Acra.*

had been at Acra in 1727, affirms that Fort James is strong and beautiful, standing upon a rugged rock that hangs over the sea, upon which a battery is raised, capable of mounting twenty cannons. Near it is a salt pit, which supplies great part of the coast with that commodity, and brings in a considerable revenue.

*Fort James;*

Within cannon-shot of Fort James, stands the Dutch fort Creveceur, on the extremity of a high rock, the beach for landing being under the fire of the artillery and musquetry of the fort. The building is square, and, after the general manner of the coast, flanked with batteries, joined by long curtains, of so irregular construction, as to be able to withstand but a short attack. Bosman affirms, that it surpasses the English fort in extent and weight of metal; yet he acknowledges that a rupture with that nation would be attended with dangerous consequences to the fort. On the contrary, all the English writers give the preference in strength greatly to Fort James; asserting, that it is able in a few hours to reduce Creveceur to dust.

*Fort Creveceur.*

A cannon-shot farther east, stands the Danish fort Christiansburgh, the only place they possess on this coast. It is stronger than either of the above forts, being a square building, of one continued battery, as Bosman expresses it; for the roof being flat, the cannon may be pointed in every direction. But all these advantages could not preserve it from a number of misfortunes and revolutions. In 1670, it was governed by John Ollarichs de Gluckstad, a man of merit and personal courage, who was perfidiously murdered by the natives, at the instigation of a Greek he had kept a great number of years in his service. This traitor sold the fort to Julian de Campo Baratto,

*Christiansburgh.*

*The history of the fort.*

the old governor of St. Thomas, for the sum of four hundred and forty-four pounds sterling. Towards the beginning of the year 1682, Barretto was confined by his own garrison, and the command taken from him. The chief of the mutineers shut up all entrance into the fort, declaring that he was ready to justify his conduct, adding, that if Baretto desired to return to Europe, he was at liberty to pursue his intentions. Baretto, however, was obstinate in his resolution not to quit his command, but by order of the king of Portugal; and charged Barbot with a letter to the court at Lisbon, expecting, in consequence, a speedy release. Meanwhile the garrison was reduced to extreme necessity, being totally destitute of bread and the necessaries of life, and the whole effects in the warehouse not exceeding sixty pounds in value, although they had received two hundred marks of gold for reparations, which they never made. In this state of affairs the Danes solicited a restitution of the fort, and obtained it in 1682, for a large sum. They pursued their commerce with great success till the year 1693, when they suffered it to be surprised by the Negroes. The Danes having incurred the displeasure of the king of Acra, that prince seized an opportunity of a sickness that prevailed in the fort to revenge himself. Observing that the Danes reposed great confidence in a Negro called Assemi, who had acquired great influence in the kingdom, and had done them considerable services in their commerce, he wanted not address to gain him over to his purposes. Assemi, flattered with the royal promises, persuaded the Danish governor that a body of Negro merchants were coming to the fort, to make a purchase of fire arms, and advised him to raise the price. In effect, the Negroes, to the number of thirty, being introduced, and the bargain finished, those perfidious wretches loaded their pieces with powder and ball, under pretence of proving them, and fell upon the garrison unprepared, finding it no difficult matter to conquer them. In a word, the Danes were driven out of the fort, their magazines plundered, and sold to the king of Acra for seven thousand pounds sterling. The fort was given to the treacherous and artful Assemi, who maintained a profitable commerce with the ships of several European nations. For some time it remained in his hands; but, on the arrival of two Danish ships, he found it necessary to make restitution, and yield to the mediation of the Dutch; a service, says Bosman, which they soon repaid with ingratitude. They had no sooner



sooner regained possession, than they stripped their ships of the necessary hands, which occasioned their falling a prey to some Turkish pirates, before they lost sight of the coast, on their return <sup>P</sup>.

When we reflect on the courage and martial disposition of those Negroes, it appears extraordinary, that they should permit themselves to be bridled by three European forts, so contiguous to each other; but what will not gold do, even in the native country of gold? The king of Acra, gained by the presents of the Dutch and Danes, first permitted lodges to be built, which they soon improved into regular forts. Each fort hath its adjacent village, though the general one is Acra, the name of the ancient kingdom, before it was conquered by the Aquamboans, and its inhabitants driven to Little Popo.

It would be no unreasonable conjecture, that the companies trading hither might be fatal, by their contrary interests and rivalship, to the general commerce; but experience proves it otherwise. The abundance of gold and slaves is indeed so great, that neither is in danger of wanting a sufficient proportion, and each is stocked with commodities which the other has not, a circumstance which often tends to promote trade. At Acra alone, more gold is frequently received than on the whole coast besides; and its extensive commerce would be still greatly enlarged, but for the perpetual quarrels between the natives of Aquamboo and Akem, the latter pretending a feudal sovereignty over the former, in consequence of which they demand an annual tribute, which the former refuse paying. The king of Aquamboo, sensible of the superiority of the enemy, and at the same time convinced that any concessions would in time cost him his whole country, has the address to divert the storm, by sowing dissension in their councils, by which means he preserves the tranquility and trade of his realm. This is the general maxim of the sovereigns of Aquamboo, handed down from father to son for several generations<sup>q</sup>. Bosman is of opinion, that the king and his nobility are richer in gold and slaves, and poss<sup>n</sup> greater treasures, than all the kingdoms on the coast of Guinea, at least on the Gold Coast.

The chief business of the people is trade, agriculture, and war, employments almost incompatible in other countries, but here perfectly consistent, where war promotes

*Fertility  
and wealth  
of the  
country.*

*Manners of  
the natives.*

<sup>P</sup> Idem. *ibid.* etiam Barbot, ubi supra.

<sup>q</sup> Phillips, p. 211.

trade and husbandry, by increasing the number of slaves and prisoners who are obliged to labour for the Aquamboans while they are maintained by them. This people is therefore by interest and inclination much addicted to arms. Though the soil is fertile, yet provisions generally fall short towards the end of the year, and they are forced to supply themselves from other countries. The Aquamboans take no pleasure in fishing or salt-boiling, though it would be easy to improve both arts to advantage. Those employments, which they repute beneath their dignity, they leave to the maritime Negroes, whom they affect to despise, or to other nations, who remove hither for the purposes of fishing and making salt. The maritime Negroes are numerous, and all the fine villages of the sea-coast thickly peopled, the inhabitants employing their time not only in fishing and making salt, but in driving a great trade with the European shipping. The number of slaves sold here is at least equal to what is disposed of on the whole coast besides, not excepting Anamaboa. When the Aquamboans are at war with a neighbouring nation, every man fit to bear arms enters the field, till the season requires they should return to their civil employments; then a certain number are detached to cultivate the ground and sell their prisoners, while the rest are employed in opposing the enemy. Those who are of a more turbulent warlike disposition, enter into the service of neighbouring nations, who are at war with others, if their own country should happen to be at peace, which seldom is the case. Among the fishermen on the coast, there are few warriors; for as they live under the protection of the Europeans, and are defended on the north by their more warlike countrymen, they are seldom attacked, or forced to change the hook and net for the sword and buckler<sup>r</sup>.

*A geographical account of the inland countries.*

Besides the kingdoms we have here described, Artus and Barbot speak of the countries of Labadde, Ningo, and Soko, all of which have ports on the sea coast; but as they are only divisions of the great kingdom of Aquamboc, we shall proceed to a short recital of the inland countries, as we imagine the reader's patience will be already tired with a tedious but necessary geographical description of the coast. It is true, we are but little acquainted with those countries lying north of the sea: but as their names have frequently occurred in the above description of the

<sup>r</sup> Barbot, Bosman, Phillips, & Atkins, ubi supra.

coast, it may be proper to enumerate them, and lay down their situations. According to the testimony of the most intelligent Negroes, and the few Europeans who have penetrated into the inland countries, the first is the kingdom of Infoko, five days journey from Acra, or the maritime part of Aquamboe, bounded by the river Volta on the east, by Aquamboe on the south, and on the north by the great desert of Nigritia. Its frontiers either way are but inaccurately marked, because the roads in this country are constantly pestered with robbers, which deter strangers from gratifying their curiosity. The natives are extremely expert in weaving beautiful stuffs and cloths, which they sell to great advantage to the neighbouring Negroes. The Akanese assert, that the Infokens are entirely ignorant of the difference between gold and ivory, neither of these commodities being otherwise known to them than as curiosities, sometimes presented in small pieces by their neighbours. Happy would it be for more polished nations, were their knowledge less of a metal, that occasions the spilling rivers of human blood!

*Infoko.*

Next to this is Comanna, bounded on the east by Infonko, on the south by Lobadde and Ningo, two provinces of Aquamboe, its northern limit being entirely unknown. All we know of this country is, that its natives bring great quantities of gold to the markets of Akkaradi, a kingdom touching it on the west, who afterwards carry it to Aboni, and thence to the Negroes of the sea-coast. Then follow, in a regular series, from east to west, but with undetermined boundaries to the south and north, the kingdoms of Latabi, Equea, Bonu, standing far north; Tafu, Quaka, Aboni, Sankuy, Agua, and Achem, all of them supposed to be rich in gold, but particularly the kingdom of Quaka. Many of the Negroes assert, that Achem extends all the way to the coast of Barbary, which is what we are unable to comprehend, by the assistance of any charts or maps we have yet seen. It is divided into great and little Achem, both being formerly united into one monarchy; now they are split into two republics, and their civil dissensions have made them less formidable to their neighbours than heretofore. Most of the gold exported from this country is brought to the European forts at Acra. The Negroes of Great Achem and Achani are of a character extremely insolent and haughty, piquing themselves upon their former greatness, and assuming in their conversation the same superiority they once maintained in action over their neighbours. The most universal channel of their trade turns to those countries bordering upon the Niger, to the northern

*Comanna.*

*Latabi,  
Equea, &c.*

*Achem.*



kingdom of Meezora, and to the great empire of Gago, celebrated for the immense profusion of gold it sends by caravans to Tombuto and Morocco.

*Inta or  
Assiento.*

West of Achem we find the country of Inta or Assiento, which modern travellers look upon as the same kingdom. It is bordered on the north by the unknown regions, on the east by Achem, and on the south by Akanni, or Little Achem. Assiento is but superficially known, as its inhabitants maintain little or no correspondence with the maritime Negroes. This alone we are assured of, that it is rich in gold, which the Achenese sometimes bring to the coast. Its situation, which is near the source of Rio Sacro de Costa, is extremely advantageous for trade, were the natives more disposed to commerce, and better acquainted with their own interest.

*Dinkira.*

Still farther west lies the country of Dinkira, six days journey from Axim, and five from Elmina. It has the country of Assiento, some say the intermediate kingdom of Cabasterra, on the east, Adom on the west, and on the north the unknown regions, extending to Barbary. The roads leading to it from Axim and Elmina are bad, rough, and winding; an inconvenience which might be removed with little trouble or expence, were the Negroes disposed to it. Formerly this kingdom was confined within narrow limits, and these but thinly inhabited; but the natural valour of the natives soon rendered them formidable to all their neighbours, except those of Achem and Assiento, who always overmatched them by the great superiority of numbers. When the roads are free and open, the Dinkiriese merchants, and the Achenese, frequent the markets of Axim, Elmina, Commendo, and Cape Coast, according to their distance and conveniency. When they are shut up, they turn their commerce to the more distant parts of the coast, and there occasion a great afflux of wealth at the inferior factories. The gold of Dinkira is naturally fine, but artfully mixed with the Fetiche gold, which we shall have farther opportunities of explaining. As to the Achenese, they have been long noted for the great trade they carry on with the natives, both of the coast and the interior countries. Their reputation for honesty, good sense, and fair dealing, is so well established, that the merchants of Commendo and Simpa, give their gold the name of akkanney chienka, on account of its purity and genuine qualities. The natives are naturally of a fierce, bold, and warlike disposition, which makes them either esteemed or feared by their neighbours, according

ording to the occasions offered of loving or dreading them. Such is their importance, that in travelling through any of the adjacent countries, they are seldom at any expence, every one being desirous of shewing his respect for the nation by the favours he bestows on the individual. Their arms are darts, scymitars, and bucklers; their language a mixture of those of all the neighbouring countries with whom they correspond; and they retain a great number of Portuguese words, which their ancestors borrowed during their commerce with that nation. In a word, it is a lingua franca, a mixture of all languages, without any peculiar principles or idiom of its own.

The next kingdom mentioned by voyagers is Quiforo, *Quiforo.* the boundaries of which we are unable to ascertain, the natives having hardly any intercourse with the maritime parts: this country is also called Juffer. Next follows Vanqui, or Wamqui, bordered on the west by Quiforo, *Vanqui.* and according to some geographers, by Incassia Igguina, on the south by Vassabs, and on the north by Bonu. The natives have the art of weaving elegant gold stuffs, which they sell to the Arabians along the Niger, or to the surrounding countries. Vassabs, or Wallihabs, as we find it in the Dutch charts, is bordered on the east by Vanqui and Quiforo, and on the north by unknown countries. It is famous for its prodigious wealth in gold; but as it has scarce any rivers, most voyagers are of opinion, that this precious metal is imported from more distant countries, although we look upon this as a weak argument. The country is sterile, producing nothing remarkable, and the whole business of the natives consists in the gold trade. One would think that this barrenness of the country was sufficient to convince voyagers that gold is the real produce thereof; how else should a nation, that has nothing to give in exchange, obtain it? It is true, they dispose of it to the maritime kingdoms, and procure, by way of barter, several European commodities, but still they must have begun upon an original capital.

The Dutch and best charts place Monpa, or Manpa, as *Merpa.* the next province to the westward; but its boundaries are very imperfectly known. To the west of Manpa lies the famous kingdom of Adom, bordered by Guasso on the *Adom.* south, by Vassabs on the north, and by Abrambo east-north-east. The Adomese trade in general with Axim and Bourtry; but when the roads are infested, or shut up by robbers, then they turn the channel of commerce to-

wards Little Commendo. The country of Adom extends in a right line along the banks of the river Schama, having a great number of fine islands belonging to it, covered with beautiful and populous villages. Formerly the government was monarchical, at present the supreme authority is lodged in a council of six lords, so powerful, that, according to the proverb, they are able to bear the king of Jabi on their horn. Were the Adomese unanimous, and free from civil wars, they would be the terror of all the surrounding nations. As the inhabitants of more northern regions are obliged to pass through Adom before they can trade with the Negroes of the coast, the Adomese never fail to take advantage of this necessity, obliging them to pay a duty that raises the price upon the Europeans, and brings in a large revenue to the republic. Adom is populous, fertile, and rich, natural advantages that have increased the pride of the natives, and rendered it difficult to trade with them. Here is great plenty of corn, roots, fruits, wild and tame animals; in a word, all that can make a people happy, were not their felicity destroyed by civil discord and arrogance. Next follows the countries of Jaben, Grand Incassen, Equira, and Avina, differing but little from Axim and Adom, to which they are continuous, either in trade, produce, laws, or customs<sup>a</sup>. Having finished this short review of the interior country, we now proceed to the general manners, laws, religion, natural history, and other particulars relating to the Gold Coast.

Jaben,  
Incassen,  
&c.

### S E C T. III.

*Containing the Methods used by the Negroes in searching for, and purifying the Gold; the European Methods used for trying this Metal; the general Manners, Laws, Religion, and Government, &c. of the Negroes of the Gold Coast.*

The method the  
Negroes  
search  
after gold.

**B**EFORE we enter upon the proposed history, we shall beg leave to extract from Bosman a short account of the method the negroes use in searching for gold, the several kinds of this metal, the manner in which they adulterate it, the different sorts of weights used in the country, and some other particulars relating to the precious

<sup>a</sup> Vide Prevost, tom. v. lib. ix. cap. 6. & Atlas Geographique, par M. Roberts.



metal, which are not generally known, and deserve attention.

There are numbers of otherwise intelligent persons in this country, who imagine that the gold mines of Africa are in the power of the Europeans, in the same manner as the Spaniards possess those of America, where they work them by their slaves. The circumstances, however, are widely different: no Europeans have access to the mines of Africa, few have ever seen any, and all the gold is brought them from the interior lands; though we believe, upon the best authority, that some parts of the coast afford mines, if the Negroes would permit them to be opened. The Negroes esteem their gold mines sacred, and of consequence cut off the Europeans from all immediate communication with them; a maxim founded upon true policy and self-defence, knowing how short a time they would enjoy them, if once they should be known to the Europeans.

The metal is generally found in three different kinds of places; the first and best is in vallies, situated between mountains. Here the Negroes, knowing by certain marks where the gold is, dig pits, and separate it from the adhering earth. The second is in, at, and about rivers and falls of water, which rushing down from the mountains, wash away large quantities of earth, and with it the precious metal. The third method of finding gold is on the sea coast, and at the mouth of rivers and rivulets, as at Axim. No sooner a heavy shower of rain falls, than those places are visited by hundreds of Negro women naked. Each of them is furnished with a small tray, which they fill with earth, and wash repeatedly till the gold is freed from the earth, and falls by its specific weight to the bottom. Some in a whole day find perhaps not the value of six-pence, while others are so successful, as to make pounds. The gold thus dug or found is of two sorts. The one is called gold dust, which is as fine as flour, and most valued both in Africa and Europe. The other kind consists of pieces of different sizes, some weighing not two-pence; others perhaps thirty guineas; but these last are scarce. However, the Negroes affirm, that, in the inland countries, pieces weighing two hundred guineas are found. These solid lumps go by the name of mountain gold, and when melted touch better than the dust, if pure, which it seldom is. The Negroes have a variety of methods to sophisticate the gold. One is the casting it into fetiches, mixed with half or a third part silver

silver and copper (M). These fetiches are cut into small bits by the Negroes, to the value of three farthings each, which serve for the current coin of the country. It is a common proverb among them, "that you cannot purchase much gold for a farthing," but even with that value in gold, you may here go to market and furnish yourself with bread, fruits, and other necessities. The Negroe females know the exact value of each bit at sight; they are seldom mistaken, generally giving you the exact value, with the same accuracy as if it had been weighed, and yet the difference is so small as to escape the eyes of Europeans. These pieces go by the name of kakerans, or little worth, which is true in a literal sense, for in Europe it is valued only at forty shillings per ounce; yet it is current all over the coast, and accepted by European garrisons in pay.

Another neat manner of adulteration they have, which sometimes deceives very experienced traders, who have not weighed it in water. They cast pieces of gold so artificially, that the external crust, about a line thick, shall be pure, while the inside consists wholly of copper, perhaps of iron. This is a new invented cheat, but the most common false mountain gold, is a mixture of silver, copper, and a proportion of gold, extremely high coloured, which circumstance much facilitates the deceit; for the Europeans being obliged in trade to receive two or three pound weight at a time, it would be intolerably tedious to touch every piece, so that they frequently trust to appearances, and are deceived. A third method, which they sometimes practise to deceive the Europeans, is the most barefaced and palpable. This is by a powder of coral or copper filings, tinged so exactly like gold, that only scales can discover the counterfeit.

(M) These fetiches are a sort of artificial and base gold, strangely shaped in moulds of a black ponderous earth. The Negroes have also fetiches of unalloyed mountain gold, which they keep for ornaments, and seldom pass into trade. Nothing can exceed the address of those barbarians, first in counterfeiting the precious metal, and then in passing it off for genuine gold. If the Europeans refuse, they are no less peremptory in denying the cheat, than artful in concealing it. So great is their obstinacy in this particular, that the Europeans are often forced to accept of what they know to be false gold, and strangers are frequently deceived by the warmth and seeming integrity of their professions (1).

(1) Bosman, epist. 6. Barbot, p. 225.

The usual method taken by the European factors for the detection of those frauds, is to cut the large pieces through the middle, which immediately discovers whether the mass be pure and homogeneous. The small bits they lay upon a stone, and beat with a hammer. If they are composed of coral, they will crumble and fly off; if metal, they will prove malleable; after which, to know if the metal be gold, it is tried by the knife or by the touch. To try dust, they put the gold in a bason, and winnow it with blow pipes. The base will fly away, and the genuine by its weight fall to the bottom. Upon repeating this experiment, the false is separated from the true, and only the pure is found in the bason. Strange, that where the trade is of such consequence, and frauds so frequent and important, the methods of trial would be so gross, imperfect, and liable to deception! How easily might the intrinsic value of every parcel be known by the proportional scales! And as for the current coin, that is of little consequence to traders, who leave it all behind.

*Methods of trying gold.*

The gold weights used here are either pounds, marks, ounces, or angels. In Europe twenty angels make an ounce; in Africa, at least on the Gold Coast, only sixteen are allowed. They have also pesos and bendos, the former of which contain four angels, and the latter two ounces. Thus four bendos make one mark, and two marks one pound of gold, equal to six hundred and sixty guilders. This standard however varies, its value depending on the fineness of the gold, and the price it bears in Europe. In general, one pound of good gold is worth a thousand guilders in Africa, and the baser judged by their variation from this standard. There is also another kind of weights, as Bosman terms it, or rather currency, used on the Gold Coast; these are white and black beans; red beans according to Barbot. The red beans, spotted with black, are called danbays, twenty-four of them being valued at an angel, and passed in payments for such. Each of these beans is equal to a Dutch stiver. The white beans, with black spots, are called jacoës, and pass often for four stivers, but they are less current than the others. The Negroes have tin and copper scales, of the same model with those used in Europe, but divided and adjusted after a different manner. To conclude this article; it is obvious, that a great quantity of gold must be lost with the earth for want of skill in separating them. It is even probable, that large portions of pure gold must be left behind, through the ignorance of the Negroes in metallur-

*Of the gold weights used on this coast.*



gy. We are told by some of the intelligent natives, that their manner is to dig at random, without having any idea of pursuing a vein. Were the mines in the possession of the Europeans, it is almost certain, that much greater profits would arise from their superior skill in the arts : how advantageous they might prove in a political sense, we shall leave politicians to debate. In Bosman's time, the exports of gold were as follow.

Marks, yearly,

*Yearly ex-  
ports by  
Europeans.*

The Dutch West-India company	1500
The English African company -	1200
The Zealand interlopers - - -	1500
The English interlopers - - -	1000 often 2000
The Danes, when their trade is good	1000
The Portuguese and French - -	800

The Portuguese, though they have at present no settlements, yet frequent the coasts, selling brazil, tobacco, brandy, and rum, and carry off the greater share of what is stated to theirs and the French account. Thus, upon the whole, in Bosman's time, the Europeans carried off yearly about twenty-three tons of gold, or two hundred and thirty thousand pounds sterling, allowing three marks to one hundred pounds. How much the export of the precious metal may at present vary from this calculation, we cannot take upon us to determine<sup>a</sup>.

#### S E C T. IV.

*Of the Figure, Character, Dress, Manners, and Customs, of the Negroes of the Gold Coast.*

*Description  
of the na-  
tives of the  
Gold Coast.*

THE natives of the Gold Coast are in general tall, strait, and well proportioned, their faces oval, their eyes sparkling, their teeth regular and white, their eyebrows thick, and their ears small; their mouths are not very large, and their lips are tinged with a better colour, and thinner, than those of the Negroes of Angola. But it would be unnecessary to dwell upon their figure, every man who has ever stepped beyond the place of his birth, has seen them<sup>b</sup>. As to the qualities of the mind, they have a quick apprehension and ready memory, together with a surprising presence of mind upon the most sudden

<sup>a</sup> Bosman, Epist. 6.  
Bosman, epist. 9.

<sup>b</sup> Artus, p. 11. Villault, p. 42.

and alarming occasions; but such is their indolence, that only necessity can oblige them to use those talents given them by nature. Neither prosperity nor adversity make any impression upon them; and although they are greedy in amassing wealth, yet are they perfectly indifferent to the loss of it. In general, they are crafty, fraudulent, and villainous, seldom to be confided in, and no opportunity is passed over of cheating an European, or indeed of cozening each other. They are dissemblers, flatterers, thieves, gluttons, and drunkards; equally incontinent and covetous, to gratify either of which passions they scruple at nothing. If they obtain a victory over their enemies, they return home dancing and singing; if they are defeated, they do the same round the graves of their friends and fellow-soldiers: the same joy appears on either occasion, and a stranger cannot distinguish a victory from a defeat, but by their shaven pates after the latter. M. Focquenbrog says of them, that they rejoice at funerals; and were they to see their country in flames, they would cry out, "Let it burn," not permitting the misfortune for a moment to suspend their riotous mirth and drunkenness. Like the old philosopher, every Negro has his maxim, "omnia mea mecum porto;" their whole care is concentrated in their own persons. In a word, they are perfectly insensible of grief and joy; for those sallies of animal spirits scarcely deserve the name of joy: they sing till they die, and dance into the grave.

The women are proportionably handsomer than the men, stait, slender, and well limbed; their chests high, their mouths small, and their eyes full of spirit and vivacity. They are quick, chearful, and loquacious; gay in their disposition, and loose in their principles as to gallantry, but temperate in their diet. Yet after all, both males and females, when necessity surmounts their natural indolence, are laborious, industrious and ingenious; applying themselves with great diligence to agriculture and fishing, so far as they are excited either by avarice or poverty. In a word, to sum up their character, they are like the rest of mankind, a composition of virtues and vices, only that here the latter are greatly predominant, and the former the result of necessity, if in such a case they can be called virtues. Their natural talents are good, but their passions are strong, their ignorance great, and they abandon themselves totally to the calls of nature,

*Description  
of the wo-  
men.*

without dread of shame, that shield of decorum, decency, and human virtue itself. Be the actions of the day what they will, those Negroes go to rest at night undisturbed by reflection, free from care, and true disciples of that doctrine, "take no thought for to-morrow." Artus proceeds in their character: "They are, says he, of so ready a conception, that they easily apprehend whatever is shewn them; nor are the eyes of the body less piercing than those of the mind; for it has been observed, that they are able to distinguish objects at the sea, incomparably farther than Europeans, and even to describe faces, where the very men are invisible to Dutchmen<sup>d</sup>."

*Their dress.*

As to their dress, it is various, depending upon fancy and circumstances: some wear long hair curled, plaited, or tied upon the crown of the head in the form of a rose, which they moisten with oil, and tinge with different colours. Others again wear it short, for conveniency; or loose, either for ornament or through neglect. In whatever manner the hair is done, it is generally adorned with gold fetiches; a sort of coral, called *conte de terra*, four times the value of gold; or with a blue coral, which they call *accori*, esteemed of equal value with the precious metal. They are so fond of hats, that they purchase them at any price, never imagining they can pay too dear for the gratification of so agreeable a vanity. Their arms, legs, and waists are likewise set off with gold, *conte de terra*, and *accori*. The usual dress is a petticoat of velvet, silk, cloth, *perpetuana*, or some stuff; and some who pretend to a taste superior to the vulgar make their paans of a mixture of fifty different kinds of cloth. This paan they plait so artfully that it sits neat round the middle, hanging half way down the leg. Round their necks they wear strings of gold and coral, amounting sometimes to a hundred pounds in value. By these worth is estimated, and those who want them are excluded the company of those who possess them. The *manceroes*, or *youth*, are less gorgèous in their dress, and the *cabocroes*, or *chief council*, so meanly habited, that one would imagine they chose to pass for the poorest instead of the richest men of the nation. They wear only coarse paans, caps made of hart's skin, strings of coral round their temples, and each has a staff in his hand, the ensign of his authority. The common people, as wine-drawers, fishermen, &c. are very poorly equipped, some with a yard or two

<sup>d</sup> Artus, apud de Bruy, p. 11.



of a sorry stuff formed into a petticoat, others with a sort of girdle only drawn through between their legs, to hide those parts that decency teaches them to conceal; to which they frequently add a cap made of rushes, or, if they can obtain it by stealth or interest, a sailor's old hat, which they wear in hot as well as cold weather\*.

Even in savage countries pride seems to have reared his throne chiefly among the females, who in Guinea display more whim and caprice, in their dress, than the males. The ladies are loaded with gold, coral, and ivory trinkets, which they dispose with infinitely more genius and variety than the other sex. No part of the body is left unadorned with those jewels; the head, waist, legs, and arms sweat under the weight of the finery; yet does vanity make them disregard conveniency, and a lady had rather appear amiable than easy, fine than healthy, convenient, or natural. From the waist downwards she wears a paan four times the length of those used by the other sex, which she winds round her body, and binds on with a fillet of red cloth, half a yard wide, the ends suspended over the paan; and, among persons of wealth, vanity, or fashion, it is laced with gold or adorned with fringe. Over the upper part of their bodies they throw a veil of silk or fine stuff, in a manner they believe the most tempting and alluring, in which intention they frequently succeeded with Europeans, beyond what the difference of manners and complexion renders credible. Before the arrival of the Portuguese and Dutch they had no idea of this rage for dress: both males and females went naked to the age of maturity; but, finding this simplicity disgusting to the Europeans, they assisted their charms by all the embellishments of art and the ornaments we have described, passing from one extreme to another; nothing being so unnatural as too eager a desire of being agreeable. In proof of this we may instance their manner of scarifying their faces, and painting the cicatrices with various colours, which they have a notion adds greatly to their beauty. Villault mentions certain necklaces, bracelets, and earrings of glass set in gold, which they wear in honour of the fetiche, after they have been consecrated by some mysterious words spoken over them. Such is the force of superstition, that the more incomprehensible and remote from human understanding is the craft of religion, the more implicit and blind is our obedience†.

*The rage of dress chiefly prevalent among the women.*

\* Artus, ubi supra. † Bosman, ubi supra. Idem ibid. Barf. p. 119.

There is in the manners of all the Negroes, male and female, a neatness peculiar to warm climates, and indeed most necessary there, we mean the practice of washing their bodies twice every day, either in salt or fresh water. This is the reason why they constantly chuse the sea-coast or banks of rivers to build on; and where these are wanting, they make tanks, or *baths*, with infinite pains and trouble, habit rendering cleanliness as essential to them as food. They teach their children to swim very young; whence they become expert divers, continuing incredibly long under water. In a word, they are so fond of this element, that half their time is spent in it, and they may with truth be termed amphibious.

*Of the Mulattoes.*

Besides the natural inhabitants of the Gold Coast, there is a great number of Mulattoes, a mixed progeny, arising from the commerce of Europeans with the Black women. This spurious race form gangs of thieves and robbers, void of decency, honour, honesty, or principle in their dealings with each other, with the Negroes, or Europeans. They call themselves Christians, although of all idolaters they are the grossest; and the greater part of their women prostitute their bodies publicly to Europeans, and privately to the Negroes. In a word, the Mulattoes are a composition of all the vices and bad qualities of Whites and Blacks, equally deformed in body and mind, and growing in both as years increase. At first their complexion is a tawny yellow, as different from the colour of the Europeans as Negroes; but as they grow old, their skin appears spotted with white, yellow, and brown spots, resembling a leopard, and rendering them the most hideous of all mortals. In general, the males are employed in the service of the Dutch, and dress after their fashion; but the women in a way peculiar to themselves, which we will not attempt to describe.

*The method of building peculiar to the Negroes.*

The towns and villages of this coast consist of a multitude of little huts or cabins, dispersed in groups, without order or design, and communicating with each other by narrow crooked roads, which terminate in the center of the town, or market-place. The farther you remove from the sea-coast, the more civilized do the natives appear, at least so far as relates to their building and living. All the towns and villages on the coast are situated in dry, barren, and sandy lands, or upon rocks and precipices; those in the interior countries, upon the most delicious spots that can

be chosen. In the latter the houses are not only better built, and of a more ingenious contrivance, but more neat in the furniture, and better peopled. But what chiefly renders the maritime places inferior to the inland towns is, the loads of filth, and insupportable stench which perpetually attends them; for the Negroes leave their ordure round their habitations, which, with the smell of putrid fish, of which they are fond, salutes the nose with an unfavoury welcome at the distance of a league. This it is that makes their kings chuse some inland situation for their residence, their example being followed by every man whose occupation or poverty does not prevent his following his inclinations. Another inconvenience is, that except the market-places of Elmina and Cape Coast, none of their streets are paved, a defect which makes them absolutely impassable after heavy rains. They are likewise less curious in planting round the villages than their inland neighbours: Axim alone affords pleasant shades against the sultry heat of the sun. In building their houses they have not the smallest regard to beauty or conveniency of situation, nor the faintest idea of perspective walks, or any kind of police about their villages: every one builds where and in the manner his fancy or rather his laziness dictates; and, in spite of all the remonstrances of the Europeans, and the facility with which they might effect certain reparations, they remain perfectly insensible to their interest, with a stupid indolence which nothing can surpass or conquer<sup>b</sup>.

As to their diet, it is by no means delicate or expensive. Their common food is a pot of millet boiled to the consistency of bread, yams, and potatoes, over which they pour some palm-oil, and garnish the dish with herbs and putrid fish; the whole dinner not exceeding two pence in value. This they esteem an excellent dish for common days; for on holidays they feast upon beef, mutton, and fowls. The better sort of people compose a dish of fish, corn, dough, palm-oil, and herbs, which they boil in water, seasoned with salt and pepper, and eat hot or cold. This dish they call malaguet, pleasant enough to those who are accustomed to it, and perfectly wholesome and innocent. But however temperate the Negroes may be in eating, they are not so in drinking. The morning is ushered in with brandy, and the evening concludes with palm-wine, mirth, riot, and tobacco, of which they are extra-

*Diet of the  
Negroes.*

<sup>b</sup> Barbot, p. 120. Villault, ubi supra.



vagantly fond. They are temperate in eating, that they may be profuse in drinking; and where their money is insufficient to supply their desires, they have recourse to their natural talent for stealing. This vice the women have in common with the men; and even children are taught it from their cradle, as if it were the first of virtues <sup>l</sup>.

*Marriages.* Their marriages differ but little from what we have described under particular kingdoms of Guinea. They are not incumbered with ceremonies, nor have they any notion of previous courtship; and no disputes about marriage-settlements are known. If a Negro fixes his regard upon a young woman, nothing more is requisite than to apply to her father, mother, or nearest relation, who never deny their request, provided the aversion of the girl be not insuperable. If she be marriageable, he immediately carries her home with him; but if otherwise she is left with her parents. She brings no other fortune than her youth and beauty; nor does the man require much: it is sufficient if he has enough to defray the expence of his nuptial dinner, cloaths for the bride, a small present of gold to the father, and a sheep to the other relations. Those expences are proportioned to his ability, and an exact account kept of the last farthing laid out, that the relations may indemnify the bridegroom, should the bride ever after desert him for another. If he repudiates her, the account is cleared, and every pretext for a demand on the relations taken away, unless he can give incontestable proofs of her infidelity, or natural defects; in which case the whole disbursements must be refunded. The wedding-day is not spent in any extraordinary acts of mirth and jollity; it is the following day, when the parties can give a satisfactory account of the choice they have made. Upon this occasion the bride appears with all the pomp of dress, the greater part of which she makes no scruple of borrowing, if the circumstances of the bridegroom be unequal to the gratification of her vanity; and she continues to appear in the same attire for several days after <sup>k</sup>.

*Polygamy permitted.*

A man is permitted to marry as many women as his humour directs, and his circumstances can maintain, though they seldom exceed twenty, and generally content themselves with any number from two to ten. Those however who would make an appearance of grandeur make up the full complement of twenty. In general, the women constitute the laborious part of the people, though many ex-

<sup>l</sup> Bosm. ubi supra.

<sup>k</sup> Artus apud De Bruy, p. 14.

ceptions occur in different provinces and kingdoms of the coast. They are obliged to cultivate the ground, sow millet, plant yams, and provide subsistence for the husband, who is idly spending his time in gossiping, drinking, and smoking. His expences the woman is forced to support by her labour, and her obedience is measured by her industry, and the indolence in which the husband is permitted to live. This however is not the case in many towns and villages on the coast, where the men toil and labour for the weaker sex, and preserve their superiority by the only natural means, the rendering themselves useful and necessary.

The rich have two wives, exempted from labour and all servile employments, to whom the management of the house is intrusted, and a sort of authority over all the other women given. The one is called *muliere grande*, and she is first in rank; the other is called *bossum*, and is consecrated to the household god, or that deity particularly worshipped by the master of the family. Of this last the husband is particularly jealous, it being highly criminal for her to use the most innocent freedom with another man; and a kiss is deemed capital, though he seldom has the power of inflicting this punishment. As to the rest of his wives, he is less regardful of their honour, especially if he can profit by their incontinence. Those *bossums* are slaves, bought with intention of being consecrated to the fetiche, and their beauty it is that qualifies them for this elevation. In right of their profession they are intitled to the husband's embraces, every night dedicated to the god, and as this occurs once at least every week, they enjoy one considerable prerogative over the other women, even the *muliere grande* herself. This is the reason why women are so ambitious of being *bossums*, and will run all hazards from the husband's jealousy, provided they are secure of those substantial proofs of his affection. The wives of rich merchants and tradesmen enjoy the greatest happiness of any women, as their husbands, industrious in accumulating wealth, are less observant of those little actions, the usual sources of domestic strife and jealousy. They are likewise handsomely provided for without labour, and their conduct generally left to their own discretion; whence it is remarked, that, for the most part, they are the most dutiful to their husbands, and repay with gratitude and constancy his kindness and confidence<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Bosm. Epist. 12. Villault. p. 157. Des March. tom. iv. p. 234.

*Many of the  
Negroes  
support  
themselves  
by the pro-  
stitution of  
their  
wives.*

It is no uncommon expedient among Negroes to marry for a livelihood got by the dishonour of their wives. These husbands are a set of voluntary cuckolds, who not only permit, but excite their women to spread all their snares for lovers, the husband often executing the office of pimp. It is inconceivable with what address those women counterfeits the genuine passion of love, and persuade the cully that they are only gratifying their own desires while they are fleecing him. The usual way is either to pretend they are not married, or else artfully to insinuate to their gallants their dislike of their husbands, on account of their inhumanity or impotence; and it is remarkable, that this last plea is generally the strongest with Europeans; as if it were a pleasure to rob another of his property, or an indirect compliment to them that the husband is unworthy. It is frequently so contrived between the husband and his wife, that he should surprize the gallant in the act of love; in which case he recovers about six pounds sterling damages; that being the price at which female honour is rated <sup>m</sup>.

*The duties  
of the hus-  
band.*

Artus relates, that the husband has a right to chuse which of his women shall pass the night with him; yet his preference to one over another is shewn with the utmost caution, to prevent jealousy and contention. Bosman says, that the emulation for the conjugal favour is carried to the highest pitch of rancour among the women; and the choice depending on the husband's will, they employ every artifice and display every charm to attract him. In general, to preserve good order and peace, a prudent husband dispenses his favours equally, and takes the women to his bed in their turns, all besides the muliere grande and bossum, who enjoy peculiar privileges which are not contested by the others; but they retain this advantage no longer than while their beauty remains; for when they grow old, they are dismissed from their authority, and reduced to menials, where but lately they were mistresses.

*Of the fer-  
tility of the  
Negro wo-  
men.*

As the wealth of the Negroes consists chiefly in the number of their family, and as this is the possession that gives them the greatest consideration with strangers, they apply their chief attention to the multiplying their children. In general, their women are neither barren nor remarkably fruitful. They pass frequently two or three years after marriage before they become mothers, probably owing to the pernicious practice of marrying while they are children.



Des Marchais accounts for the small number of births from a practice among them of suckling a child four years, and never under three; a custom highly prejudicial to the propagation of the species, and the health and strength of the mother <sup>n</sup>.

In Guinea a pregnant woman is treated with the highest respect and tenderness, as well by strangers as by her husband. No sooner is she delivered of her child than rich offerings are made to the fetiche, for the recovery of the mother and the health of the infant; but the most extraordinary ceremony is before delivery. Immediately before the pains of labour seize her, she is conducted to the sea side or the banks of a river, followed by a number of little children, who throw all manner of ordure and excrement at her in the way, after which, salutation she is washed with the utmost care. Without this cleanly ceremony the Negroes are fully persuaded, that either the mother, the child, or one of the parents, will die during the period of lying-in. All voyagers agree in asserting, that the Negro women are delivered with the greatest ease to themselves, and the least trouble to those about them, of any of their sex in the world. "Here is no lying-in, no gossiping, or expensive groaning entertainments," says Bosman, "as in Europe; a woman brings forth her child in a quarter of an hour, goes the same day to the sea and washes herself, without ever thinking of confining herself for a month to her bed or chamber." He says, that he has seen women bring forth twins without a shriek or scream, and they are seldom confined above two or three days <sup>o</sup>.

As soon as the child sees the light, it is consecrated by the priest, and, if above the common rank, hath three names bestowed upon it, though always called by one only. The first is that of the day on which it was born; the next, that of the grandfather or grandmother, according to the sex of the infant; and the third, that of its parents. The number of his names increases with his years, every remarkable action of his life, as the killing the chief of the enemy, a wild beast, or some such feat of prowess, giving occasion for an additional appellation. It would be unnecessary to enlarge upon the ridiculous excess to which they carry this practice; the best memory being unable to retain the names of a man who has been much in action. The most respectable and honourable name is that which a man obtains in the social hour, and at a palm-wine feast in

*Great respect paid to a woman with child.*

*The great facility with which they bring forth children.*

*Names given to the infant.*

\* Artus & Bosm. ubi supra.

o Idem, ibid.

the market-place: a presumptive argument that the social virtues are here preferred to all others. Some have their names according to the number of children their mother has borne, as the eighth, ninth, or tenth child of such a woman; but this is only when the mother has brought forth at least six or seven children <sup>P.</sup>

*The ceremony in regard to the mother of ten children.*

In the kingdom of Anta, a woman who has borne ten children is separated from her husband, and banished to a solitary hut, remote from all mankind, where she is carefully supplied for a certain time with every necessary of life; at the expiration of this term, and the due performance of all customary ceremonies, she returns to her husband, and lives with him as before. It is pity no writers have informed themselves as to the reasons for so peculiar a custom; probable indeed it is, that, like most of their other peculiarities, it is founded upon superstition and ignorance. In all the countries in Guinea, without exception, women are esteemed unclean during their catameniae, and not only deprived of their husband's bed, but banished the house during that term. Artus reports, that they circumcise their children of both sexes at a certain age with great solemnity; but Bosman and Barbot both affirm, that the operation is hardly known in any country on the Gold Coast, besides Acra, where it is done at the time of baptism or consecration.

*Children circumcised.*

Married persons have no community of goods. When the woman happens to possess a fortune, both have their particular proportions of the expences of the family, which they support out of their present funds, or supply by their industry; but the clothing of the family is always at the charge of the husband. On the death of either, the respective relations seize upon all the effects, not leaving the survivor or children the smallest part, notwithstanding they are obliged to pay a certain share of the funeral expences.

Besides their lawful wives, the Negroes often keep concubines, who are frequently preferred, and more tenderly treated than those women to whom they are yoked for life; but their children are reckoned illegitimate, and if begotten upon a slave, are retained as such by the heir to their father's fortune. The usual method then for fathers who are fond of their bastard children is, to manumit them with the usual ceremonies; upon which they

are incontestably free after his death, and enjoy every right of free-born persons <sup>9</sup>.

Although the children by their wives be legitimate, yet do they never inherit their fortune in any kingdom on the Gold Coast, except at Acra. The eldest son, supposing the father to be a king or chieftain, succeeds him in his employment; but, besides his father's shield and sabre, he has no pretensions to any other part of his fortune. Here it is no advantage to be descended from rich parents, unless, what seldom happens, paternal love obliges them to make a settlement on their children before their death, which must be done with the utmost secrecy, otherwise the relations will compel the children to refund the last farthing. Nothing can be more perplexed than the right of inheritance. Bosman says, that from all he could learn or observe, the brothers and sisters are the lawful heirs, in the manner following. They do not jointly inherit, but the eldest son of his mother is heir to his mother's brother, or her son; as the eldest daughter is heiress of her mother's sister, or her daughter. Neither the father, his brothers, sisters, or other relations, have any claim upon the chattels or effects of the defunct; but for what reason, neither the law nor tradition explain. Bosman is of opinion, that the immorality and loose principles of the women, first introduced a law seemingly so unnatural: at present it is customary in Eastern countries to educate the children of a sister as one's own, and appoint them to succeed either to a throne or an estate; for they are assured that a sister's son must be of their own blood, but cannot be so of those called their own children; the truth of which must entirely depend upon a woman's veracity <sup>1</sup>. In defect of these heirs, the brothers or sisters take place; but if the deceased have no near kin, then the relations of the mother succeed. Bosman says, that no European could ever yet attain a clear knowledge of the laws of inheritance, yet are they sufficiently distinct and well known to Negroes. It is true, violent disputes and contentions frequently arise on these occasions, but they are never owing to their ignorance who ought, but who shall succeed, when the relations of the deceased are too powerful in men or arms, and thence are encouraged to disturb the course of law <sup>2</sup>.

*The laws concerning inheritance.*

We have said, that a Negro values his riches by the number of his slaves, though they frequently bring on his

*Masters responsible for their slaves.*

<sup>9</sup> Villault, *ibid*.

<sup>1</sup> Bosm. Epist. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Id. *ibid*.



ruin; because every master is obliged to repair the injury done by his slave, whether it be theft, robbery, adultery, or murder. Negroes are likewise responsible for their sons, nephews, and other relations; though in this case all the relations assist towards the fine by a mutual contribution, each giving towards it according to his circumstances. Should they refuse to complete the fine, the delinquent must suffer corporal punishment, and often death, should his crime be of a heinous nature.

*Laws concerning adultery in the inland countries.*

In the interior countries the laws in criminal cases are generally more severe, as they are not softened or restrained by the influence of the milder manners of the Europeans. He who debauches the wife of another man here, is not only ruined himself, but draws destruction upon all those who are connected with him by blood. If the delinquent be a slave, the punishment is death, and that in the most cruel manner that can be devised; besides, a certain fine is imposed on his master. Here they despise the sordid villainy of setting a woman's virtue to sale, and profiting by her prostitution. If she be caught in adultery, her life is the price of her fault, unless it be purchased by her relations at a great expence; but the woman who indulges her passion for a slave infallibly dies, without possibility of redemption. The slave perishes with her, and her relations are obliged besides to pay a considerable sum of money to the injured husband. Every considerable Negro is in this case his own judge; and if he should be too weak alone to avenge himself, he calls in the assistance of his friends, who readily offer their aid, being sure to be no losers amidst the plunder that ensues. The inland Negroes are more wealthy than the inhabitants of the coast, and therefore persons convicted of adultery pay roundly for their incontinence, the fine sometimes amounting to five thousand pounds sterling. Bosman says, that he has lived in most parts of the coast, but cannot recollect one person whose fortune was equal to so heavy a burthen; yet is it by no means uncommon in the interior countries. Even the maritime kings, except those of Aquambao and Acron, would be hard pressed to raise such a sum by the sale of all they were worth. But the severity of the punishment by no means banishes the crime from society: a woman with strong passions is blind to all consequences; nor is it indeed to be wondered at in countries where polygamy is permitted, and where twenty women are confined to one man, each in her turn to taste the frigid, cold, and languid joys of an enervated husband.

band. Their wits are therefore continually employed on the means of procuring lovers, and because the men, terrified at the punishment, are less forward than the nature of the sex might admit, the women omit no stratagem to allure them. So unbridled are their passions, that if they meet a young fellow alone, they run into the most indecent excesses, and swear they will accuse him to their husbands of an attempt to violate their chastity, unless he gratifies their lust. The woman has no redress should the husband prove unfaithful; her only remedy is to wean him from his vice by the gentlest, softest, and most engaging arts; for none besides the muliere grande dare presume to chide him: she indeed will check him severely, and even threaten to leave him, if he persists in his irregularity; but this is all the punishment she is able to inflict. Hence it is that every woman is studious of pleasure, and of preserving to herself those marks of favour by her obliging conduct which she cannot command by her authority<sup>1</sup>.

Bosman relates, that all over Guinea several of each sex live unmarried, at least for some time, though commonly the number of single women exceeds that of single men, and yet few Negroes die unmarried, unless it be at a very early period of life. Barbot confines this celibacy to the interior countries, and affirms, that on the sea-coast all the women marry young; and indeed the disproportion of men to women must be very extraordinary, if, where polygamy is tolerated, and the men restrained to no certain number of wives, the women should be allowed to live single for any time. Nay, it is certain, that many families ally themselves by marriage as soon as the children are born, without any other ceremony than the consent of parents on both sides. The women would indeed frequently chuse to live a single life, because they are then free, and confined to the embraces of no particular man; but the demand for wives being so great, their parents seldom indulge them in their inclinations, and they are hardly ever refused when asked. Such, however, as have made free with the passion before marriage, are never the less respected for it by their husbands and the world; on the contrary, they are esteemed the better qualified to enter into matrimony, and are accordingly frequently preferred to absolute vestals<sup>2</sup>.

*Children married as soon as they are born.*

<sup>1</sup> Id. *ibid.*    <sup>2</sup> Artus apud De Bruy, p. 17. part vi.

Of the pub-  
lic prosti-  
tutes.

In the countries of Eguira, Axim, Ancobar, Anta, and Adom, are certain women who never marry, but are dedicated by profession to the public use, being initiated in their vocation in the following manner. When the manceroes perceive that a public courtesan is wanting, they petition the caboceroes that they will graciously please to buy one for the common benefit. Upon this the caboceroes either give a beautiful female slave for the purpose mentioned in the petition, or they permit the manceroes to buy one. She is immediately brought to the market-place, accompanied with a woman practised in the art, who instructs the novice in all the mysteries of the profession. As soon as she has gone through her noviciate, she performs a public probationary trial with a boy; by which is insinuated, that from the nature of her profession she must receive all persons indiscriminately who offer themselves to her, not even excepting little boys. A house is built for her, in which she is obliged to confine herself for eight or ten days, denying no man access to her favours; and this term being expired, she obtains the reputable title of abelore, or abeleera, signifying a common prostitute. She now has a more fashionable dwelling house appointed her by one of her masters, in a particular part of the town, lives by her profession, and pays a certain proportion out of the profits to those who put her in a way of bread. The price is stated at a penny for each favour she grants; and the wretch is soon reduced to infamy, poverty, disease, and the lowest ebb of misery. While her beauty and health remain she is the idol of the place, and no misfortune is equal to the loss of the abelore; but no sooner is she attacked with disease, the infallible consequence of her calling, than she is despised, abandoned, and suffered to perish, the most loathsome and wretched of all human creatures. Bosman gives it as a proof of the high esteem in which they are held during the reign of beauty, that if the European factors have any dispute with the Negro mercadores, no method so effectually terminates it, as seizing on the person of the abelore, and confining her till satisfaction is made. The manceroes, or *young men*, are no sooner acquainted with the fatal tidings, than they hurry with a petition to the caboceroes, or *elders*, requesting, that they may have her set at liberty at any price, which they will pay by a general contribution<sup>w</sup>.

<sup>w</sup> Bosman, Epist. 11, 12, 13.

However



However indelicate and unpolished the Negroes may be in some particular customs, yet they are by no means wanting in a certain exterior politeness in all their mutual intercourses. Artus informs us, that when they first meet in a morning, they clasp each other in their arms, and pray that the day may be prosperous. They begin their compliments by seizing the two first fingers of the right hand, and cracking them; after which they pull all the other joints, kiss the forehead, and repeat the word *auzi*, their mode of salutation. Upon an accidental meeting, after they had before seen each other, the form of compliment among the coast Negroes is, pulling off the hat or cap; but the interior Negroes do not esteem uncovering the head as any mark of respect. At Elmina the usual compliment after cracking the fingers is, to repeat the word *bere, bere, peace, peace*; and the first question is, "How did you sleep?" This is the ceremony of the first visit for the day; but if they have seen each other before, the master of the house expresses his welcome by telling him, "You went out, and are returned;" to which the visitor replies, "I am come again;" words which probably convey some compliment that we cannot readily discover: but their chief politeness is called forth when they are honoured with the visit of a stranger, the native of some other country. The first compliments being passed, the wife, or female slaves, bring water, grease, or ointment, to wash and anoint him; which office they perform with their own hands.

*Politeness of the Negroes in their salutations.*

The visits of kings and persons of superior rank are attended with several peculiar and extraordinary ceremonies. When one king proposes visiting another, before he approaches his palace, he dispatches a person of the first fashion in his train, to give notice of his intention to kiss his majesty's hands, those of all the nobility of the court, and to present his master's compliments. He is presently returned to his own king, attended by some person of distinction about court, to assure his majesty of a sincere and hearty welcome. While he is on his way, the general ranges the soldiers in order of battle before the palace, or in the market-place, to do honour to the royal visitor, and also to shew the power and grandeur of his own master. The visiting king marches at the head of his armed retinue, with all the solemnity and importance imaginable, and enters the city with his men drawn up to the best advantage,

*Of royal visits.*

and in such a manner as to lengthen the ceremony, and seem to increase their number, while the other is no less politic and artful on his side. When they pass each other, military compliments are made, which consist in skipping, leaping, and howling. Having at last reached the palace, where the other king is seated at the gate expecting, he does not advance directly towards him, but, turning either to the right or left, all his attendants, throwing down their arms, present their hands, by way of salutation, to the court and guard of the king visited. Then the two monarchs approach each other, with a solemn pace, each armed with a shield, and set off with his finest ornaments and attire. If the visitant should happen to be of higher rank and power, or extraordinary honours are intended him, his three first fingers are pulled, then he is embraced and welcomed three several times; but should he be of inferior quality, then only his middle finger is cracked, and one salute given. Those mutual compliments paid, each retires to his seat, and the lords of each retinue go through the same ceremonies. For the space of an hour nothing can present a more busy scene; ambassadors continually passing to and fro with mutual congratulations: at the end of which the visitant is desired to walk into the palace, where he is presented with a collation of whatever the country affords. When they have feasted heartily, they take leave with a repetition of the same ceremonies, and the visit is ended<sup>z</sup>.

*Distinction  
among the  
slaves.*

Few families upon the coast keep any considerable number of domestic slaves, nor do they make any great parade of them at their festivals or visits. The exclusive right of selling slaves is vested in the rich, not so much by law as from the necessities of the meaner rank, which render them unequal to their purchase and maintenance. Those who are employed in this capacity in almost all the maritime parts, consist of such as have bartered their freedom to the rich for sustenance, and are marked by them with certain signs that confirm them their property. If after this any attempt should be made to run away, they lose the left ear for the first trespass, the right ear for the next, and the third fault is punished either by death, or selling them as slaves to the Europeans. Hence it appears that the master does not originally enjoy the same authority over them as over born slaves; it is their vices, and a repetition of their faults that increase his powers. The

<sup>z</sup>-Bosman & Artus, ubi supra.

children indeed are born to that servitude their father entailed upon them by his engagements; but still there is a degree of tenderness shewn, unknown in the inland countries, and as a kind of compensation for misfortunes, the result of their birth, not their crimes. They are employed chiefly in fishing, agriculture, and those arts necessary to the support of their masters and themselves. As to their kings, they have slaves of different degrees, among which they particularly distinguish those who have incurred servitude through inability of paying certain impositions or fines imposed either by the king or courts of judicature. These wear neither cap, hat, or bonnet, their distinction being to have the head always bare. Most of the natives, according to Villault, disavow the appellation of Negro, which they allege is proper only to born slaves. This is the assertion of Bosman, who makes no distinction between Negroes and Moors; though Villault rather thinks the terms Negro and Æthiopian to be equivalent and synonymous <sup>a</sup>.

Among the Negroes there is a variety of mechanical arts, in which they have made a proficiency; such as making wooden and earthen vessels and plates, chair-mattings, copper ointment-boxes, bracelets, necklaces, rings, and ear-rings of gold, silver, or ivory. All sorts of weapons and instruments of war; in the manufacture of which, and all kinds of smith's work, consist their chief excellency. Their tools are so rude and simple that one is amazed to find they can finish with any degree of exactness steel-ware, and materials of gold, brass, and copper. They consist only of a stone for an anvil, a pair of tongs, a pair of bellows, a file, a saw, and a hammer. They also manufacture gold and silver hat-bands, some of which they sell to the Europeans, of so fine a thread and exquisite workmanship, that Bosman greatly doubts whether they can be rivalled by the most polished nations <sup>b</sup>.

*Of the arts known to the Negroes.*

In building canoes, the Negroes are also exceedingly ingenious. They have them of various sizes, from thirty to fourteen feet in length, and three or four feet in breadth. By the Europeans they are used in loading and unloading the shipping, and by the natives in trading from port to port, and fishing on the coasts. In proportion to their dimensions, they are rowed by three, five, seven, nine, eleven, thirteen, or fifteen rowers, an odd man being necessary to steer, and the rest seated in pairs upon banks or beams laid across. The canoes of the smaller size are

*Of their canoes.*

<sup>a</sup> Villault, ubi supra.

<sup>b</sup> Bosm. Epist. 9.



pushed forward by a sort of paddle, instead of oars, resembling a spade in shape and length. Their large canoes are seldom used in fishing, except in stormy boisterous weather. Their fishing materials consist of great and small hooks, harping irons, which they use when they have hooked a large fish, together with casting, sweeping, and fixed nets; the latter remaining all night in the water, are drawn in the morning <sup>c</sup>.

*Of their  
agricul-  
ture.*

With regard to the husbandry of the Negroes, they sow in the rainy season, the soil being incredibly hard at other times. At seed time they choose a spot of ground either in the fields or woods, which they think the most convenient; for here is no landed property, the earth being the gift of nature, it is left in common to all those who have industry to cultivate it. The king, indeed, assumes to himself the right of permitting particular spots to be ploughed, and sometimes extends this jurisdiction all over his dominions; but the request is no more than a matter of form, as it is never denied; and if it should, the will of the monarch is but little regarded; and in this particular instance alone does his sovereignty fall short of absolute despotism. Having turned up the earth with a spade, which they call *koldon*, they suffer it to remain in this condition for eight or ten days, until all their neighbours are as far advanced in their labours as themselves; after which they assemble on the first day of the *fetiche*, or their sabbath, to deliberate on the necessary regulations in sowing the seed. First the king's lands are finished, after which every man returns to his neighbour's ground. The only reward from his majesty consists in a present of goats flesh and palm-wine, proportioned to the number of labourers; and they conclude their work by dances in honour of the *fetiche*, and songs, praying that he will bless them with a fruitful harvest. It is incredible with what expedition their labour is recompensed, and the grain sprung out into leaf. Des Marchais affirms, that in three days after it is sown, the whole field is covered with a beautiful verdure, and the crop ready for reaping in less than three months. He adds, that the Negroes choose an elevated ground for sowing their maize in, that grain requiring a dry soil, not subject to inundations; on the contrary, rice and millet demand low marshy lands, and especially the former, which flourishes only when it is covered with water. Their custom is, when they see the grain beginning to form, then to build little huts in the middle of

<sup>c</sup> Bosman, *ibid*.

every field, where they lodge their children to keep off the birds, and serve for scarecrows. The natives of the coast find it so easy a matter to dispose of all their grain, that they have established corn markets in every village, where the current coin is gold dust, cowries, and bujiis<sup>d</sup>. The price of grain is rated by certain officers of police, appointed by the king; a wise institution, that prevents fraud and extortion by forestalling the markets: to these all the men and women resort early in the morning, some to buy, others to sell, and many to exchange one sort of grain or fruits for another. The women are so indefatigably industrious, that they frequently travel six miles to market, laden with such burdens as would crush an European female, each having a child on her back, and a large hamper of grain or fruit on her head; nay, there have been instances of a Negro woman's having carried a burden for an hundred miles out of the interior countries, and sold it at the seaport markets for European commodities, looking-glasses, bracelets, ear-rings, glass beads, and other female trinkets, so passionately fond are they of dress and finery. The markets are exempted from all sorts of duties and imposts; but if the Negroes, in their way to market, meet with any object which they have deified, and raised to the rank of a fetiche, they will make a present to it out of their trading stock. At mid-day, the wine merchants come with their pots of palm-wine to market; then the affairs of the day are finished, and all the Negroes and sailors find themselves equally disposed to rejoice and regale themselves; nor is there any other commodity that has a quicker sale than the palm-wine. Market being ended, whole droves of men and women are to be met on all the roads, singing and dancing with a cheerfulness really to be envied, and not the smallest vestige of the care, the toil, and fatigue of the day remaining<sup>e</sup>.

*Of their  
corn mar-  
kets.*

Besides those frequent markets, they have also great fairs, which they observe twice every year, and regulate in such a manner, that they never fall twice upon the same day. Thither the natives are assembled from all hands to purchase European wares, which they send to the inland countries: here it is that their passion for dancing is seen in the most conspicuous manner; and so general is it amongst the women in particular, that often without voice or instrument, after quitting the hardest labour, they will begin dancing. It is a custom imme-

*Of their  
fair, for  
European  
commodi-  
ties.*

<sup>d</sup> Barbot, p. 257.

<sup>e</sup> Bosman, & Artus, ubi supra.

*Of their  
festivals  
and dances.*

morial among them, to assemble in the evening in some appointed part of the town or village, to dance, sing, and make merry for an hour before they go to bed. They appear in their best habits, and the women in particular rival each other, with all the emulation and jealousy of dress conspicuous among European females. The usual hour for this rustic ball is at sun-set; and the music is composed of horns, trumpets, flutes, and other instruments, rather inspiriting than pleasing to the ear. The men and women dispose themselves into couples, face to face, as in our country dances, not leading through in any particular figure, but dancing promiscuously, the pairs still keeping by each other, with a number of ridiculous grimaces and contortions. They advance and retire, strike the ground with one foot, and in passing kiss each other's forehead, pronouncing certain words. Their movements are sometimes quick, sometimes slow, just as the music happens to strike into a shrill treble, or a deep base. In a word, the whole dance is a kind of regular confusion, that, with the appearance of the greatest disorder, preserves a certain method and rule adjusted to the music.

On their legs the women wear a number of small bells, that jingle as they move in their dance; and the men hold in their hands a kind of fan, made of horse tail, or the extremity of an elephant's rump, with which they strike each other's shoulders as they pass. All their gambols and absurd gesticulations seem mightily to please themselves, but they are not fond of performing them before strangers: their dances alter according to the occasions to be celebrated: those performed in honour of the fetiche are more grave and solemn, carrying in them an air of religious devotion. At Abramboe are dances in honour of the king, which they keep for eight consecutive days, and call this term the dancing season. Hither resort a prodigious concourse of Negroes of both sexes; both men and women spend several weeks before in making preparations to figure at this annual carnival, and every thing is conducted with great pomp.

Artus relates, that they have schools for dancing and music, where the young people of either sex are taught at a small expence. It frequently happens, that heated with the nature of those diversions, and the power of palm-wine, the scholars sally forth armed into the streets, where they commit abundance of disorders and riot, till they are secured by the public magistrates; for although the Negroes are by no means quarrellsome, yet are they susceptible



tible of great passion and violent rage when once embroiled, seldom parting without effusion of blood <sup>f</sup>.

All the diversions among the Negroes consist of those dances, music, and mock combats, which frequently end tragically. In the year 1667, was celebrated at Cape Coast, under the direction of a prince, son-in-law to the king of Fetu, public games in commemoration of a victory gained over the king of Akari, and lord of Abramboe. Villault was told by the Danish chief, that the mock battle performed here cost on both sides no less than five thousand lives. In 1682, Barbot was treated at the same place with a Negro battle, and a handsome entertainment; which, however, happily ended without blood. He was greatly amazed at the dexterity and address with which they conducted themselves, both in the field and at the entertainment, where, says he, there was nothing wanting of European politeness <sup>g</sup>.

*Of their  
mock  
battles.*

The musical instruments of the Negroes are various, and extremely numerous, but all of them equally barbarous and unpleasing. The principal are the horns we have mentioned, which are made of ivory, some of them weighing thirty pounds. For ornament, they carve upon these the figures of men and beasts; but in a very uncouth manner. At the great end of the horn is a piece of rope, coloured with hen's or sheep's blood, and at the small end a square hole, through which they blow the instrument. The noise produced is really horrid, but varied and reduced to a sort of tone and measure. The trumpet needs no description; it is much of the fashion of that used in Europe, but without the winding and spiral pipe, that gives sweetness and modulation to the sound. - Of drums they have ten different sorts, all of them formed of excavated trees, covered with sheep's skin at one end, in shape resembling a kettle-drum. Some are covered only at one end, the other being open; and those when played on are placed on the ground, which serves to confine the sound. They beat with sticks shaped like a hammer, sometimes with strait sticks, and often with only their hands. The drums are generally used as an accompaniment to the horns; and to render the concert more full, they join in with trumpets, tabors, and a sound formed by the striking a hollow piece of iron with a bit of wood, after the manner of the salt-box. Of late years they have invented a sort of small drums, covered on both sides with sheep's skin,

*Of the mu-  
sic of the  
Negroes.*

<sup>f</sup> Barbot, p. 258.

<sup>g</sup> Artus, in Col. De Bruy. part vi. p. 19.

and extended to the shape of an hour-glass. The sound they make is by no means disagreeable; but their best instrument is a kind of harp, with six or eight strings. This is a hollow piece of strait wood on which the strings are stretched, having for a back another piece of wood joining it at each end, and forming a sort of triangle: upon this they play with their fingers, and not unmusically; the instrument having a soft, grave, and melodious tone.

*An excellent institution among the Negroes.*

To conclude the customs and manners of the Negroes, we shall just mention one of an excellent nature; it is an institution by which there is not a common beggar to be seen on the coast. It is true, they have a number of poor, but not a single beggar by profession. When a Negro finds he cannot subsist by his labour, he binds himself over to a master, who is obliged to find him in all necessities of life. In return, he engages to defend his master with all his power, to watch his affairs, and, in seed and harvest time, to labour as a husbandman. Thus every man becomes usefully employed, and the infirm and aged are taken care of by their friends. In other respects, the whole people are beggars; and the king himself is not ashamed to beg of an European a trifle which he might purchase for a penny; but this is rather from a freedom and openness of temper, than from necessity; Bosman, indeed, attributes it to a shameless avarice <sup>b</sup>.

<sup>b</sup> Auct. citat. ibid. & Bosman, Epist. 9.

END OF THE THIRTEENTH VOLUME













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